



# THIS INDIA

SHEILA DHAR

illustrated by :  
A. Ramachandran














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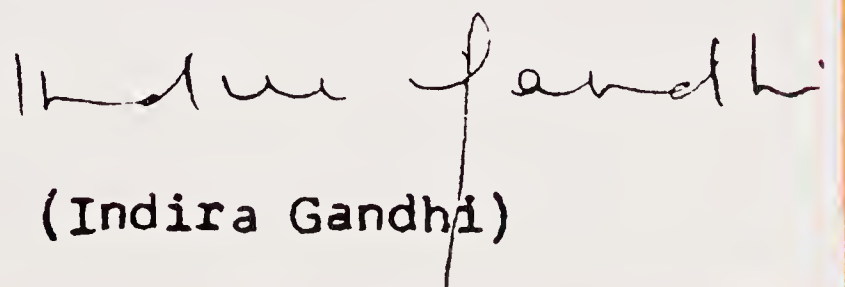
Dear children,

India is not just the land, mountains and rivers. India is you and me, all the millions of young and old who are her citizens. The thoughts and actions of the people who have inhabited India for thousands of years have moulded our society. Out of the past grows the present, and what we do today will shape our future.

When we build a road or plant a tree or inculcate good habits, it is not for ourselves alone but also for those who will be born in the years to come. The work of building is not easy. We must give it all we have and strain every nerve and muscle. It is only by trying that we learn and by doing that we gather strength. All the world over, progress has been possible because of the hard work and sacrifice of pioneers.

These 25 years have laid the foundation of the new modern India. The children of today must continue this work and make our country united and strong. Anything which is easy soon becomes dull. The very hardships we face provide challenge and excitement.

The future is calling you. Don't be disheartened by difficulties. You can change the bad, not only by doing big things but by trying your best to do even ordinary things extraordinarily well.

  
(Indira Gandhi)

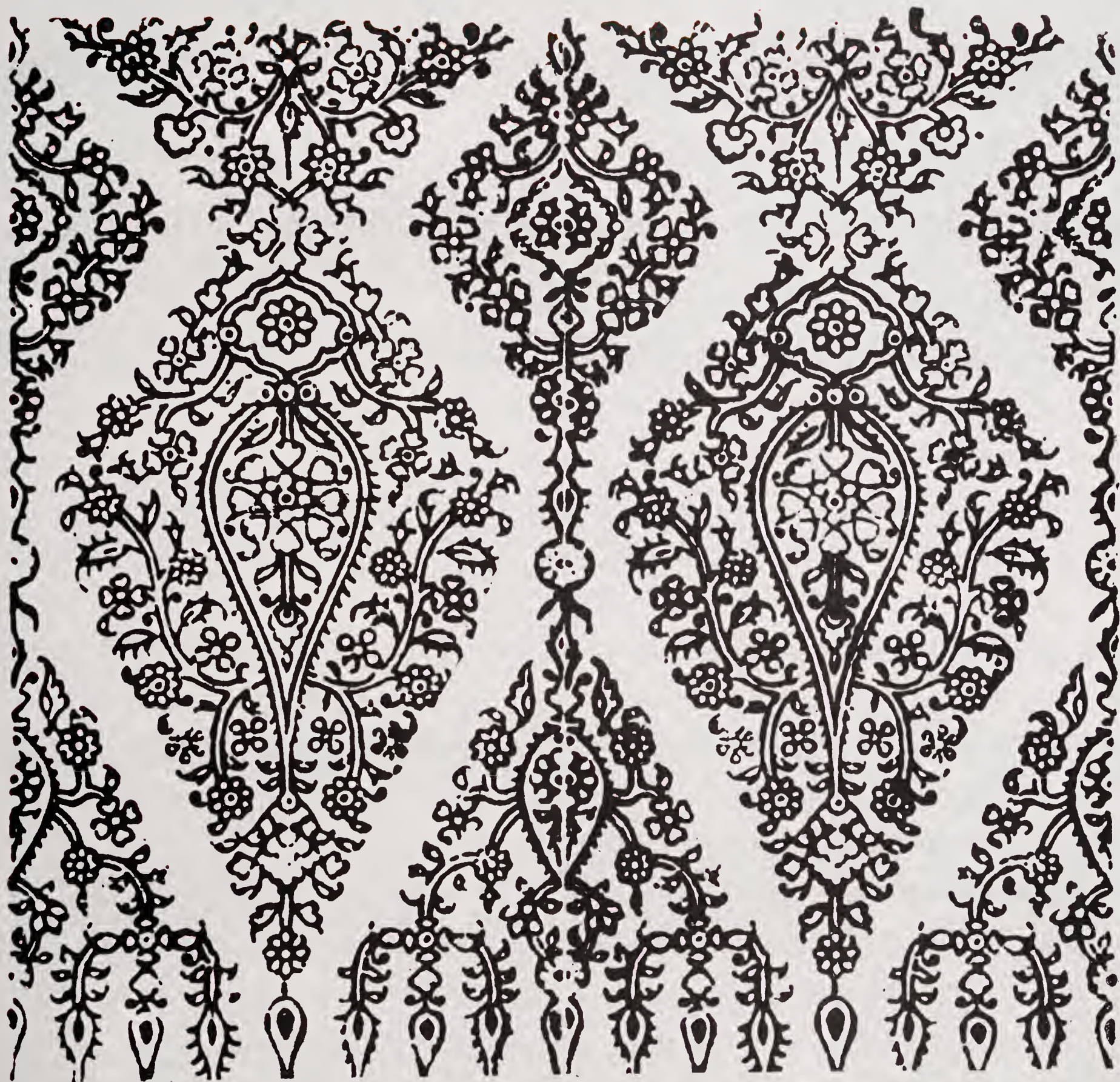
January 16, 1973.







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SHEILA DHAR



First Edition : 1973

Reprinted 1999

© PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

ISBN : 81-230-0564-4

Price : Rs. 200.00

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, PUBLICATIONS DIVISION,  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING,  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, PATIALA HOUSE, NEW DELHI-110 001

**Sales Emporia • Publications Division**

- Patiala House, Tilak Marg, New Delhi - 110 001
- Super Bazar, Connaught Circus, New Delhi - 110 001
- Hall No. 196, Old Secretariat, Delhi - 110 054
- Commerce House, Currimbhoy Road, Ballard Pier, Mumbai - 400 038
- 8, Esplanade East, Calcutta - 700 069
- Rajaji Bhawan, Besant Nagar, Chennai - 600 090
- Press Road, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 001
- State Archaeological Museum Building, Public Gardens, Hyderabad-500 004
- 1st Floor, 'F' Wing, Kendriya Sadan, Koramangala, Bangalore - 560 034
- Bihar State Co-operative Bank Building, Ashoka Rajpath, Patna - 800 004
- 27/6 Ram Mohan Roy Marg, Lucknow - 226 001

**Sales Counters :**

- C/o PIB, C.G.O. Complex, 'A' Wing, A.B. Road, Indore (M.P.)
- C/o PIB, 80, Malviya Nagar, Bhopal - 462 003 (M.P.)
- C/o PIB, 7, Bhawani Singh Marg, Jaipur - 302 001 (Rajasthan)

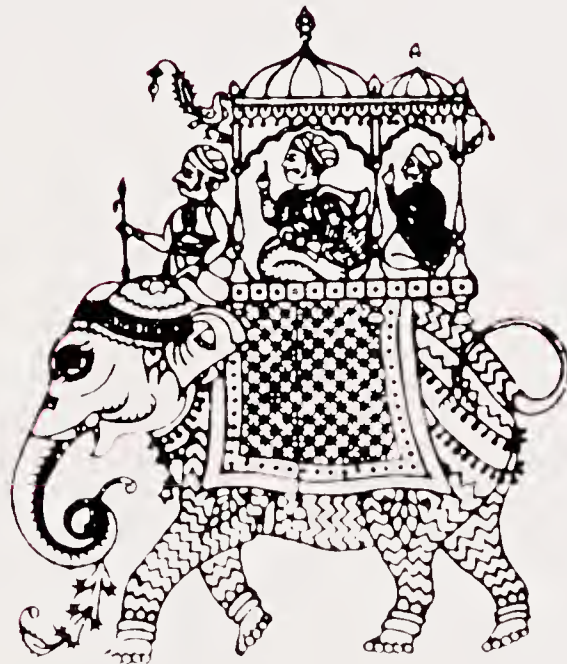
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Typeset at : Quick Prints, Naraina, New Delhi .

Printed at : Aravali Printers & Publishers (P) Ltd., New Delhi.



**PHOTOGRAPHS : T. S. NAGARAJAN**



**DESIGNED AND ILLUSTRATED BY A. RAMACHANDRAN**







## **PREFACE**

This book was published to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Indian Republic. Communication with the young readers is achieved through visual materials familiar to the Indian eye. The main thrust of the content is Indian culture and the Indian way of life. Traditional motifs from classical, tribal, folk and modern art are used to explain these to the child. As such the original design and format of the pages is an integral part of the author's intention.

The present volume is therefore a reprint rather than a revised edition. At the same time, there are minor factual changes relating to population and development which will be helpful to the child who is reading the book today, more than twenty years after it first appeared.

SHEILA DHAR



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A MATTER OF BELONGING









ou have so many things. They are yours. Your books, your shirt, your favourite corner, the things you work with and the things you play with. And most important of all, your home. These belong to you.

But do you belong to anybody or to anything? You will say quickly that you belong to your parents, to your family, your city or town or village. And of course you belong to your country, to India. Everyone tells you this and you accept it, without even having to think about it.

In the world of today, it is a comfortable feeling to be at home in a particular place, to know that it is yours and that you belong to it. For us in India, this is easy and we tend to take it for granted. But millions of people in the world are still struggling for a place they can call home, a place where they can speak their own language, and be free to act as they please. Many of these millions have succeeded. Many are still fighting so that they too might win for themselves this precious feeling of belonging. For this they are willing to go through much suffering.

What about you? You feel quite at home in your country. But this feeling has come to you as a gift that you hardly notice, because it was a gift made to you before you were born. To keep it safe with you, you will have to look after it. To look after it well, you must know what it is.

When you say you belong to a family, what do you mean? That you happened to be born in it? Do you feel close to your brothers and sisters only because of a blood tie? Only because your parents happen to be the same? Surely that is not all. The reason for your feeling close to them is that the same things have



happened to you; you have shared things, fought amongst yourselves, laughed at the same jokes, and heard the same stories from your aunt and your grandmother. This is what we mean by common experience. There may be some words that make everyone in your family laugh, because there has been a joke in the family which has something to do with a particular word. No outsider would be able to understand what you were all laughing about, perhaps not even if you sat down and explained the whole thing to them. There must be many things which make the whole





family sad or happy or thoughtful because they remind each one of the same thing.

Everyone is glad to come back to their family after a long visit to someone else's house, even if the place they went to was better than their own. If you feel most comfortable with your own family, it does not mean that you think the family is perfect. You can still find many things wrong with it, disagree amongst yourselves, and even have serious fights within the family. One day you may even go away. But one thing is certain. Your language will always be understood best by your own family. It is they who will know exactly what you mean by the words you use, by the way you say them. No matter where you go or what you do, the place where you have grown up will always be your home, at least in your mind.

It is in this way that we, 846 million of us, belong to India. Not only because we were born here but because we are a part of what has been happening in this country for thousands of years. We may not always be aware of our Indian-ness. Even you do not know how Indian you are. What you are wearing may not be an Indian costume. What you speak or read may not be an Indian language but Indian-ness goes much deeper than clothes or language or living in India. It is in your





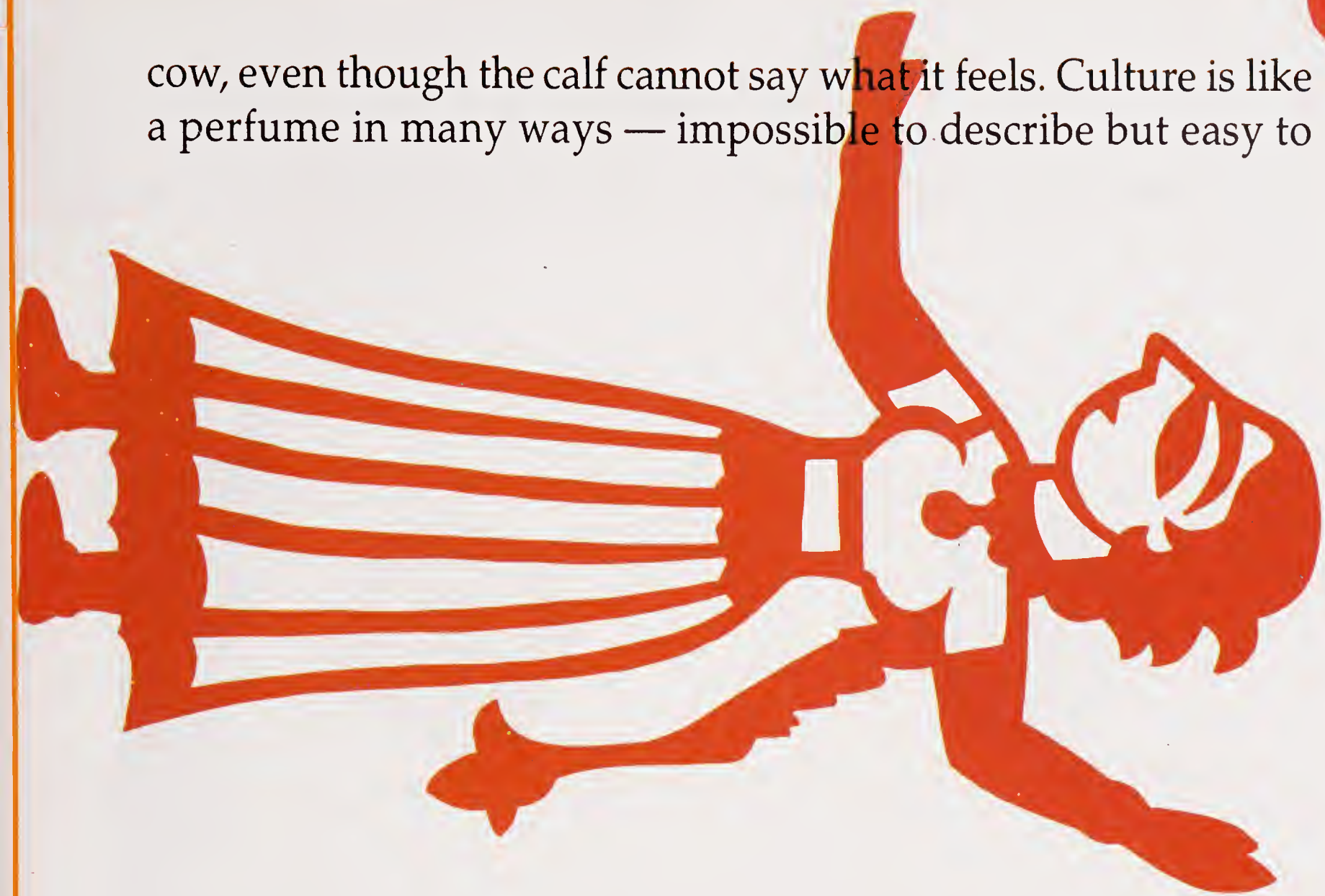


mind and your blood, under your skin and in your memory. Even if you wanted to, you couldn't shake it off.

India is not just a piece of land; it is thousands and thousands of years of experience. This experience, of millions of people who called India home, has added up to something very definite which colours each one of us. We call it Indian culture. It is difficult to tell you what our culture is; but it is very easy for you to feel it and know it for yourselves. You know it as the calf knows the



cow, even though the calf cannot say what it feels. Culture is like a perfume in many ways — impossible to describe but easy to



recognize. It is this culture that you have in common with every other Indian, in town or city or the remotest village. You share it even with the Indian of a thousand years ago, and also with the Indians who are yet to be born. It is like a mighty river stretching behind you as well as ahead of you.

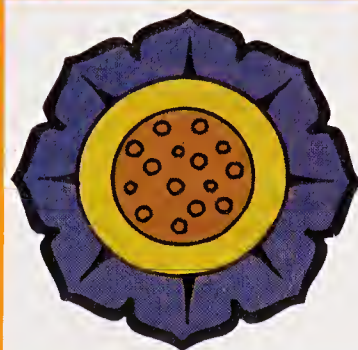
Belonging to India does not mean that you cannot belong to the world, or that you are not a world citizen. It is quite possible to be a part of many groups at the same time, just as you are a part of your family, your town, your school, your neighbourhood, your football team and your group of special friends. You certainly can be a citizen of the world, but you would be a rather feeble world citizen unless you were an Indian first. Think of your Indian-ness as the ground on which you



stand, as the language you speak, as the raw material that you are. This can be made into whatever you wish. But without your Indian-ness, you would be like someone without a face, body or voice.







2


SHARING THE HOMELAND





ou have heard again and again that India has a continuous culture going back thousands of years. Not many other countries in the world today can claim this. There have been other ancient civilizations — in Egypt, Greece, Mesopotamia, Rome and elsewhere. But in most of these, after some hundred years, there was a break. One way of life ended and another began. The people living in those regions today have very little in common





with those who lived there, say a thousand years ago. One could say that they were now an altogether new people. This is not so in our country. We are the same people that we were thousands of years ago. Of course, many things have happened to us in these years. Many things around us have changed very greatly, but still, deep down, many of our ways of thinking and feeling and doing things have remained the same.

This may be because India looks the same today as it has always looked. The people who have lived here for thousands of years have all known the same skies and mountains and rivers; they have waited for the same rains and seen the seasons change in the same way, year after year. They have heard the same bird-calls; tasted the same fruits, smelt the same flowers, seen the same colours. All Indians, whether today or three thousand years ago, have been familiar with the same trees — the *neem*, the banyan, the *pipal*, and the palm. Because India was their home, they felt the same way about it and every Indian shared this feeling about the special places of this country — places where rivers meet, places where great men lived and worked and died, places where fairs and festivals have always been held. Sharing the



same house for a long time can bring people very close together; and this is what happened to the people who lived in India also.

Even the children who lived in India three thousand years ago had many things in common with you, even though some of you might look very different from them. The first pictures they drew were the same as the pictures you made when you were



young — the elephant, the peacock, the tiger. Like you they also loved to eat the mango, the banana, the coconut and the tamarind fruit. They too played with toy-carts like you. They breathed the same Indian-ness that you do, and they recognized its scent without having to think about it, just as you do. This means there is something very big and important that has continued in India all these years. What is this something?

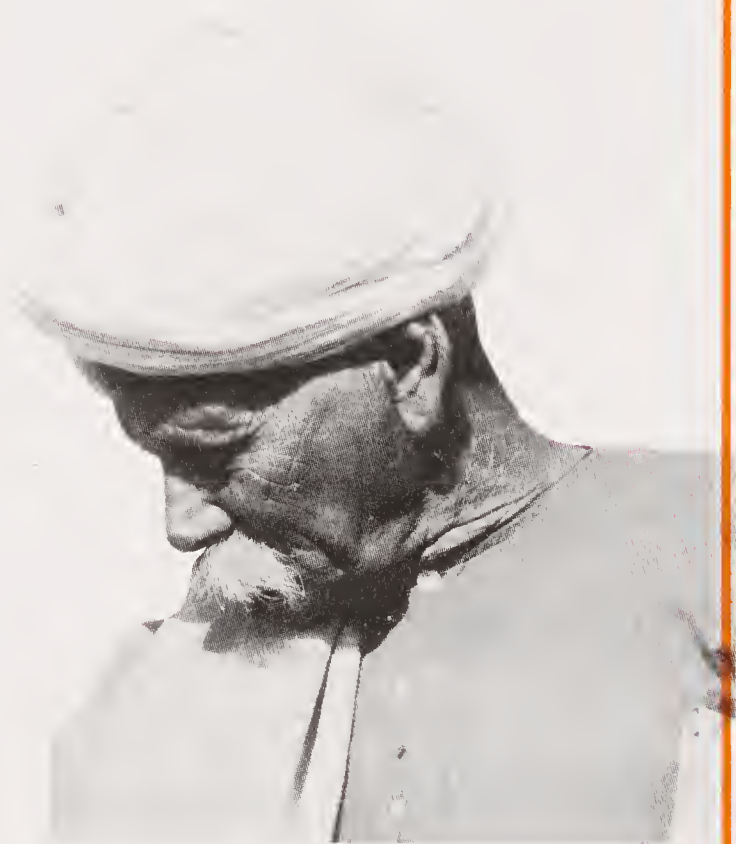


Before trying to answer, let us ask another question. This second question may help us to get an answer to the first. Who is an Indian? Close your eyes and a thousand pictures will flash through your mind. The shepherd in the snowy



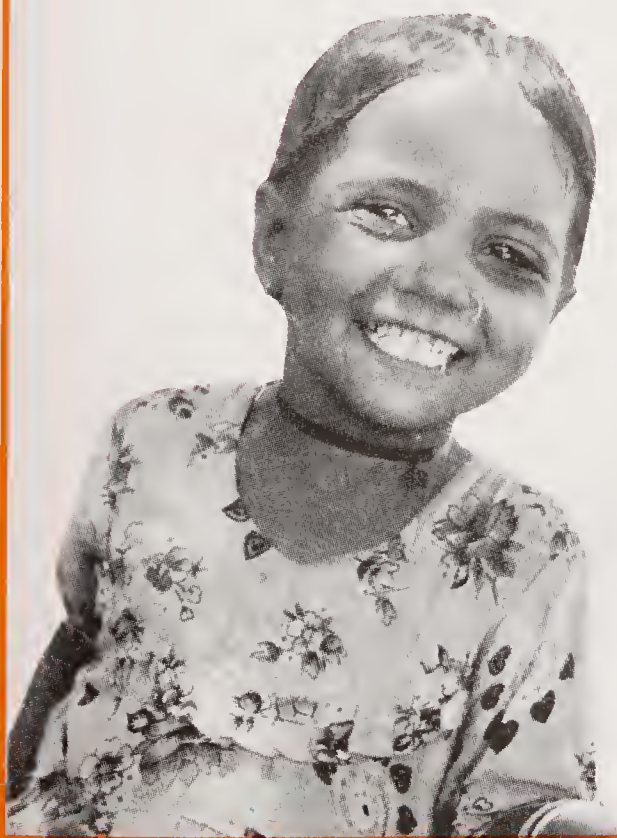


uplands of Kashmir; the fisherman of Kerala, the camel-driver in the desert of Rajasthan, the peasant in Bengal bent over his rice seedlings, ankle-deep in water, the worker in the blast furnace at Rourkela; the engineer examining a road, a bridge or a building; the teacher, the clerk and the small shop-keeper who cycle to work everyday; the leader of a procession shouting slogans; the research worker peering into his microscope; the barefoot Adivasi in his colourful costume who has never seen a train; and even you, reading this little book, dressed just a



little bit differently from each one of your friends. All these are pictures of Indians. You can go on adding portraits to this picture gallery of Indians, and your list will not be ended soon.

Now just one more question. What is India? Or rather, what does India look like? This brings you to another unending list. High mountains and flat plains; hot, dry deserts



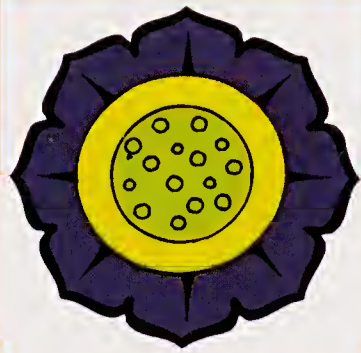


and flooded rivers; thick green forests and stretches of barren land. Any of these could be India. So could a field with a lonely farmer working a hand-made plough, with a small village of mudhuts in the background; or a busy street in a big city, choked with cars, buses, trams, noise and smoke, with huge, many-storeyed buildings blocking the sky; or a tribal village in a far-away forest, where people go out to hunt with simple hand-made weapons so that their families might eat; or a modern laboratory where world-famous scientists study the latest discoveries of man. Between such extremes there are many, many other scenes, all different from one another, which are also India. This is what we mean when we say that ours is a country of tremendous variety. We have many, many kinds of people, professions, costume, language, climate and landscape. Our people do a very large number of different things.

We still have no answer to our questions. Who is an Indian? What is India? But in trying to answer these questions, you have come near an important truth about your country, and it is this: if so many different kinds of people are all Indian, and if these very people have been Indians for thousands of years, this Indian-ness we started to talk about must be something very strong indeed, something which cannot easily change or die.

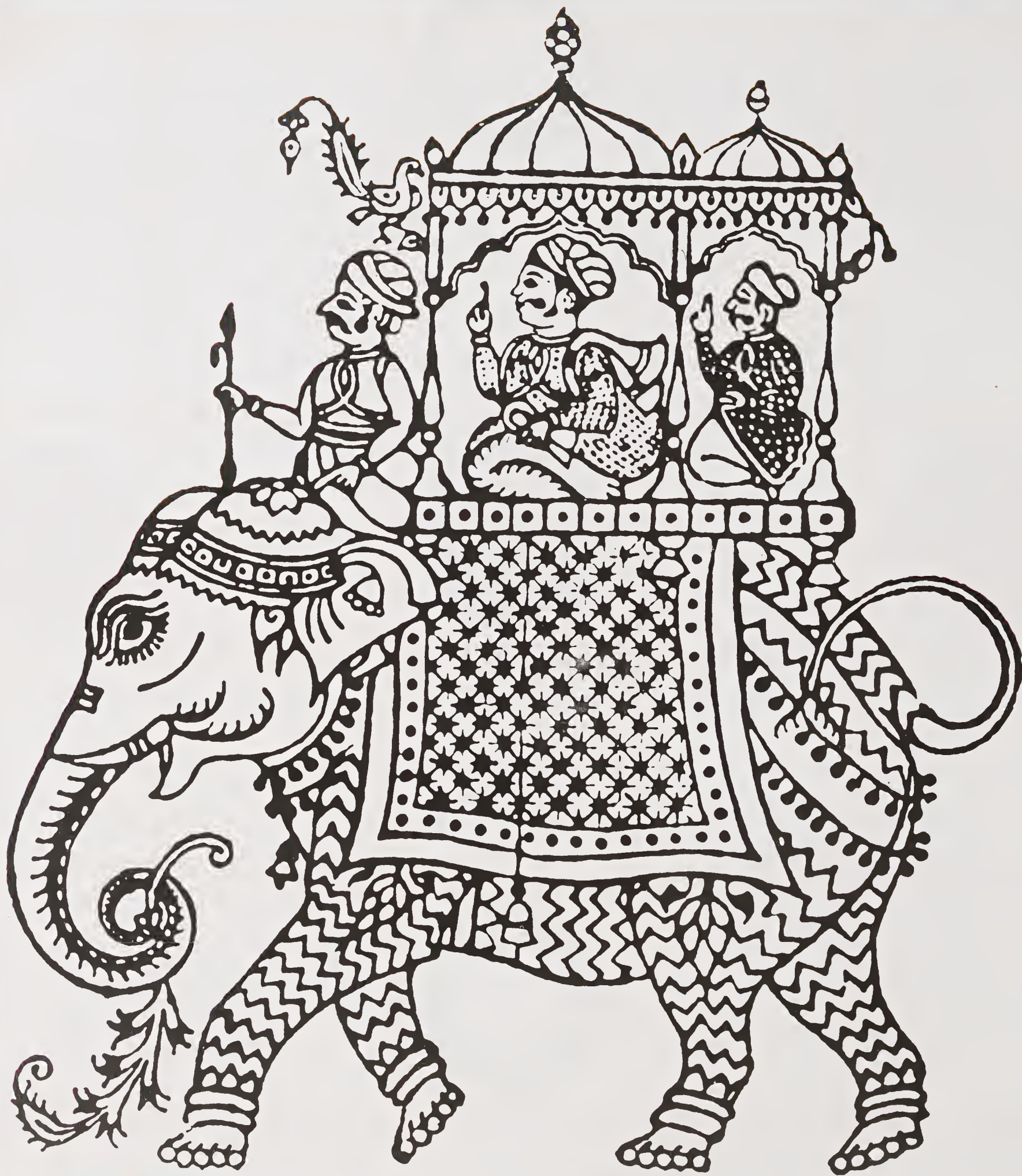






WHAT IS INDIAN-NESS?





he Indian-ness we all talk about is a particular way of looking at life and certain habits of thinking and feeling which are special to us. For instance, the feelings of an Indian family when a girl gets married and leaves her home are the same throughout India whether it is the north or the south, the east or the

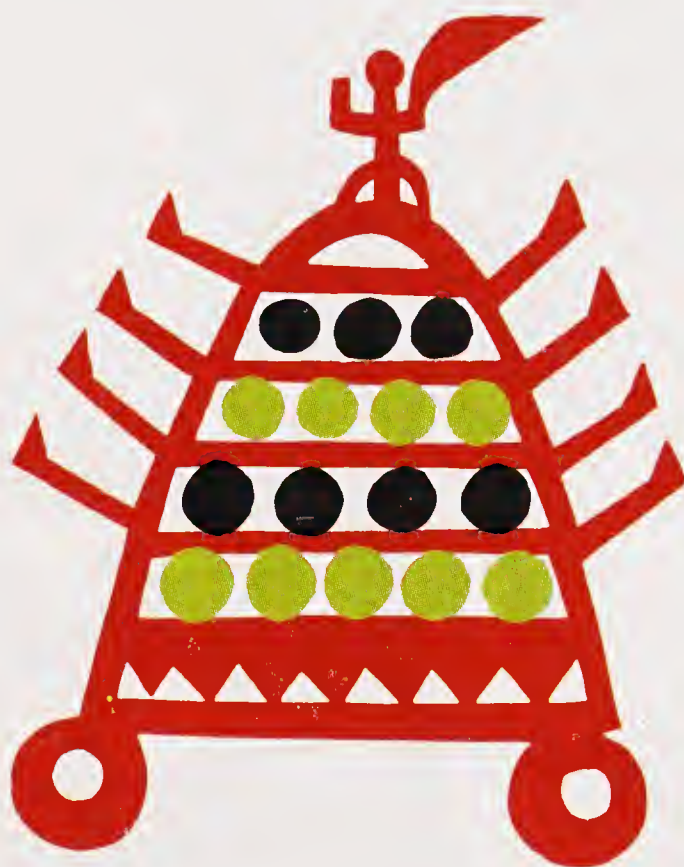


west. This has nothing to do with what language the Indian family speaks or what their religion is, or whether we are speaking of now or of two hundred years ago. An Indian son-in-law is a special person and gets special treatment in India. Elders in India, whichever part of the country they come from, whatever language they speak, bless young people in the same way, and wish them the same good things in life.

These examples are not important in themselves; but because they are easy for you to recognize, they can help you to see that there really is such a thing as Indian-ness.

They say the lamb is innocent, the peacock is colourful, the fox is clever, the swan is graceful; or, that the Rajput is brave, the Pahari is tough, the Punjabi is hardy, the southerner has brains and the easterner is artistic. Of course, it is very wrong to put such simple labels on people. They mislead us, and are never the whole truth. But we could ask, in the same way: what are the qualities of the Indian? What is it that tells an Indian apart from other people?

Again, there can be no exact answers to this. We cannot say, "one, two, three" and tick off these qualities on our fingers, the way one answers oral questions in arithmetic. To describe a typical Indian is as difficult as making a list of the things that make up





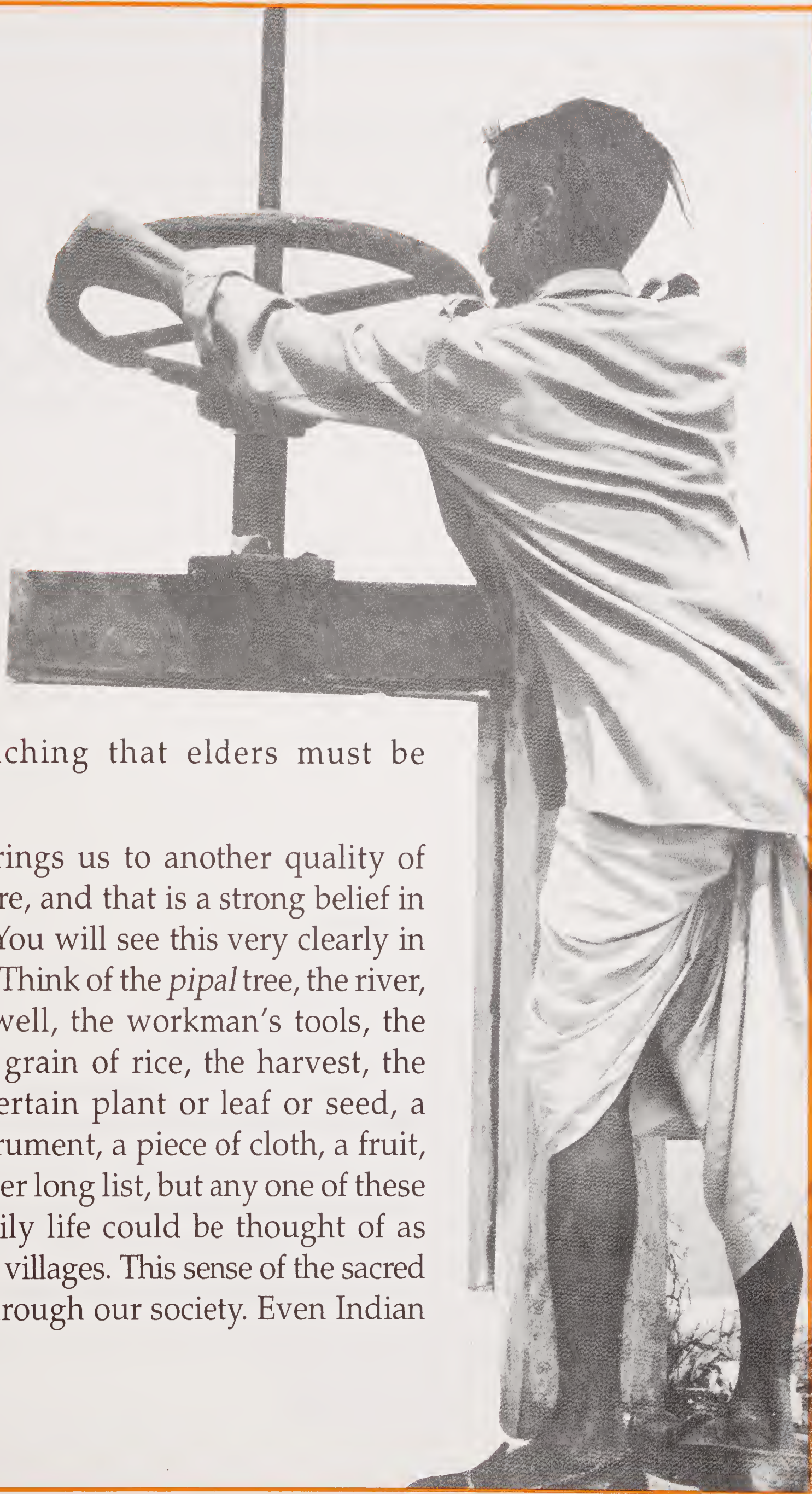
the blueness of the sky. But let us try.

One of the most important qualities of Indian culture is that it has always been able to accept new influences and still remain what it was. All through India's history, foreign people have come to this land for different reasons; to settle, to travel, to learn, to loot, and to conquer. The new ways of life they brought with them were not cast away by the people who lived in India, but absorbed and made their own. In a way our culture is like a bicycle : it is stable because it keeps moving. This is one of the reasons why India's ancient culture is with us even today, when we are trying our best to become a modern nation. We still have the ability to accept new things and make them our own.



An atomic reactor was set up at Trombay. This was an entirely new type of activity, which no one in India was used to. But at the same time, no one in India felt in the least uncomfortable or strange. True to her habit, India had accepted something as new as nuclear fission with the same ease and naturalness as the



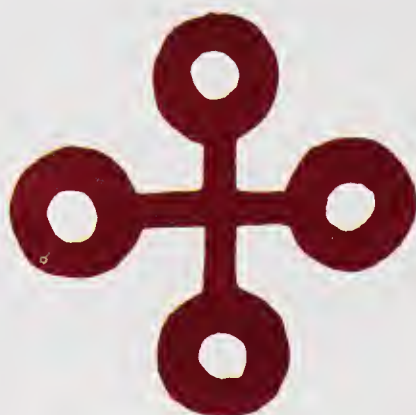


ancient teaching that elders must be respected.

This brings us to another quality of Indian culture, and that is a strong belief in sacredness. You will see this very clearly in our villages. Think of the *pipal* tree, the river, the village well, the workman's tools, the plough, the grain of rice, the harvest, the kitchen, a certain plant or leaf or seed, a musical instrument, a piece of cloth, a fruit, a pen. Another long list, but any one of these things of daily life could be thought of as sacred in our villages. This sense of the sacred runs right through our society. Even Indian



children in cities would perhaps not put their feet on a book, or



kick a tree. Indians respect age and wisdom, anything that gives energy, and all that is good. They are very ready to regard such things as holy. The huge dams and factories that we have in India today are a sign that we are becoming more modern. But even these have been called "temples of the new age" by one of our great leaders.

Tradition means those ways of thinking and feeling which have come down to us from the past. We still have tremendous faith in the power of goodness. This again has nothing to do with religion. A national leader appealed to a group of dangerous dacoits of Madhya Pradesh, to give up their criminal lives and start afresh. One by one they came and laid down their arms. They did not surrender to force but to goodness. This took place



in the year 1972, but it could easily be a legend of ancient times. Many people say that such a thing could not have happened anywhere else in the world today.

Happenings of this kind tell us that ours is a living and growing tradition. It is still taking in new influences and merging them with the old. If this stops, the Indian tradition itself will die. Often we see the old and the new side by side, in the process of becoming one. For instance, when the installations at Tarapore Atomic Station were being put up, the labourers did not start work until they had worshipped the pieces of machinery that they had to handle. Nobody thought this odd or strange. Some villagers who came to visit a defence exhibition paid their respects to "Gnat devata" with folded hands because they knew how the Indian-made Gnat had helped the nation. Some of the Adivasis who were flown to Delhi by jet aircraft for the Republic Day celebrations had never even seen a train before, but their journey





was taken for granted by everybody.

In the India of today, we are living in several centuries at the same time. The atomic installations, the Gnat and the jet aircraft belong to the twentieth century and give promise of a more modern Indian in the future. Adivasis still live the same kind of lives as their forefathers did three hundred years ago. The folded hands of the villager in the presence of wisdom and learning and strength stretch back through many centuries into the beginnings of our history.

Indians respect the man of learning, the hero, the man of wisdom, and the holy man much more than the man who has money. This has been true for thousands of years and it is still



true today. The teacher in the village primary school has, even now, a more honoured place than the rich farmer.



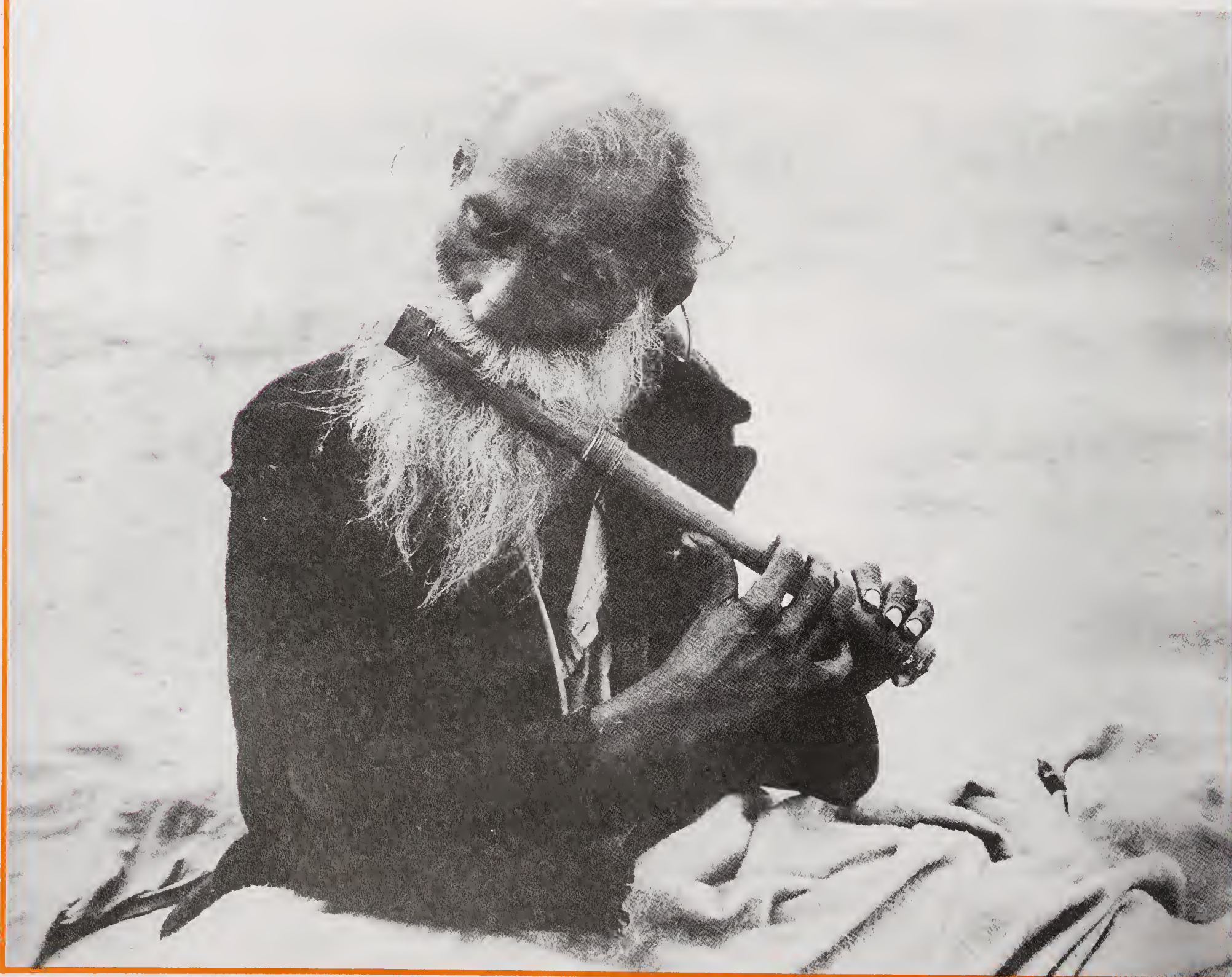


As a people, Indians have great patience. It is not in their nature to be in a hurry. They can wait longer, suffer more and work harder than many other peoples. They are extremely hospitable and would willingly go through much trouble and hardship to look after a guest. These qualities have been of help to India, but in some ways our tendency to take things as they come has also harmed us.

Generally, Indians feel that the solution to every problem we create, or are faced with, lies within ourselves. If the solution comes from outside, it cannot last, and is therefore not a real solution. When you are older you can decide for yourself whether this tradition still continues or not.



You must not think that these qualities are only Indian. It would be quite wrong to say that no one except the Indian believes in goodness or family life or tolerance or tradition; what is typically Indian is the particular combination of qualities we have tried to describe. If you have managed to get even a very rough idea of what Indian-ness is, you may be able to understand yourself and many things about your country a little better than you do now.







4

THE BEST TIME TO BE YOUNG





s each day, or each month or each year in your life the same? No. There are times which have been more exciting than others, times which you have remembered, and looked back on again and again. Perhaps you made a discovery, alone or with friends, or met an interesting person, or tried to build an aeroplane, or stitched a doll's clothes with your own hands, or wrote a poem,



or saw a mountain or the sea for the first time.

In the same way, every country has periods which are more remarkable than others, periods when the people of that country are able to build something useful or powerful or beautiful in a burst of creative energy. In the case of countries, such periods can go on for a long time.

Today, we are in the midst of such a period in India. Never before in the long history of our country have we tried to do as many things as in the last twenty-five years.

This also happens to be a remarkable period in the history of the world. Your parents, when they were children, could never have imagined that human beings would one day walk on the surface of the moon, or make contact with Mars. But this has happened in your own times.

Not only have such things happened, but you are quite used to them already. This is because you have ways of being in touch with the exciting things that are happening in the world. Your great-grand-parents had no such ways and were quite cut off. In fact, you are much closer to the rest of the world than any Indian children before you have been.

This is an exciting time for India, too. A great deal is happening here. You may say : "In every country something or other is always happening. What is so special about India today?" Well, it is this. Much of what is happening today should have happened a long time ago. We did not get a chance to do those things at the proper time, so we are doing them today, along with the work that every country has normally to do to carry on. We



are also busy working for the future, at the same time. This is like trying to finish next week's homework today so that you are free to do something else you need to do. Do you now see how much we are trying to do? Yesterday's work, today's work, and tomorrow's work, all at the same time! Why are we doing this? Because our country has already lost a great deal of time, as you will soon see. We not only want to catch up with time we have lost, but also to take ourselves forward. If we did not do this, we would again be left far behind the advanced nations of the world. These nations did not have to stand still for centuries, like India. They have been going ahead steadily all this time. India cannot now afford just to walk along. She has to collect all her strength and run forward as fast and as far as she can.

What would happen if a five-year-old child went to sleep and woke up only at the age of twenty-five? Think of all the things the sleeping child would miss — school, games, training for a job, a chance to earn his own living, knowing and meeting other people, and the experience of trying out things for himself. What do you think he would like to do when he woke up? Naturally, he would try to do everything he had missed, all at the same time. This would not be easy. He would have to make a tremendous effort and to find ways of doing things very quickly in order to become like a twenty-five year old as soon as possible. It is something like this that India is doing today.

Like human beings, countries also have a way of growing up. It can happen, of course, that a country is very old but still not fully grown-up. In any case, countries pass through many stages and are always trying to improve themselves. Most of you know that in India today we have a system called democracy,



which means the rule of the people. Every adult, whether he can read and write or not, has a say in how the country shall be run. We no longer think this particularly wonderful, because it is now a part of our daily lives. We are used to democracy and take it for granted. When you are a little older, you will realize how wonderful it really is. First of all because it means that we respect the rights of each individual, and consider the opinion of every adult human being worthy and important; and secondly because it is one of the signs of being grown-up.

We have borrowed many ideas about the democratic system from the British Parliament. Do you know that it took even an advanced country like Britain hundreds of years of effort to reach this stage? They went through many great changes and shake-ups. Each of these was a reaction against some kind of tyranny or other. First there was a great movement called the Renaissance. This was a natural protest of the human spirit against a narrowminded and unfair system. Then came what is called the Reformation. This was a fight against the old fashioned and strict rules that were brought in in the name of religion. The next big change was the Industrial Revolution in which machines started to do much of the work that men used to do. This produced more wealth but it took another hundred years before Britain could accept that this wealth belonged not to any king but to the people and that only the people had the right to say how they wanted this wealth to be used. This was political democracy. One stage beyond this is what is known as the welfare state, which means a country where the life of the ordinary people is the most important consideration. One day you will understand all these terms a little better. Just now it is enough for you to know that all these stages of 'growing up' took Britain nearly 500 years.



India is more than fourteen times as big as Britain and has at least fifteen times as many people. But even then, she is going through all these stages in one generation, that is in about 30 or 40 years, instead of in 500 years like Britain. We are at once in the middle of a Renaissance, a Reformation and an Industrial Revolution. We are trying to spread education, to improve our agriculture, to build up industries, and to sweep away the meaningless and harmful do's and don'ts of caste, religion and community, which keep people apart. In short, we are trying to get rid of ignorance, superstition, and inefficiency, or in other words, to modernize ourselves. Let us call this many-sided change the Great Indian Revolution.

You must have read about other revolutions, perhaps the French, the Russian and Chinese Revolutions. All these have been full of violence, even though the fighting and killing was for unselfish ends. Ours has been and still is a peaceful revolution, a revolution that happens mostly in the mind, through thinking, feeling and discussion. You will find that this way of doing things is typically Indian.

We won our freedom from foreign rule in the same way. You all know that for nearly 150 years, India was ruled by the British. All this time, they used this land of ours for their own gain, not caring very much what happened to the people of this land. For a long time, the Indian people did not raise their heads or speak up for themselves. But when at last they did challenge the mighty British empire seriously, it was not with guns or swords or any kind of violence. And in the end, it was the poor unarmed Indian people who won. All the strength and wealth and power of the British was no match for the joint will of the people of India.



India's fight for freedom is a great story and we will come back to it a little later. Here we are talking of it because it shows us that our way of doing things, specially if they are big things, is just a little bit different from that of other nations. Many other countries besides India had also to shake off foreign rule, but they all used very different ways of becoming free.

The Indian way required great courage and faith on the part of our people. In more recent times, we have again shown the same great faith in ourselves and the same courage. We have decided to give every grown-up Indian the right to vote. That grown-up may be a man or woman, educated or not, able to read and write or not. None of these things makes any difference. What matters to us is that every Indian citizen should have the right to choose the leaders who will run the country. If you compare this act of ours to the way many other countries run their affairs, you will see what a bold thing we have done. For instance, did you know that until quite recently, the women of Switzerland had no right to vote? We straightway gave everyone the right to vote because it was a short-cut to democracy, and we had no time to waste.

So you see what a lot of things we have started to do in the last fifty years! What is most remarkable is that the Government is not trying to force all these changes on the people. It is the people themselves who are bringing them about, and doing so because they believe in them and want them.

You have seen in how many ways this is an exciting time in India. You already know that it is also an exciting time for the



world. Are you not glad that you have been born in these times, and not a hundred years ago? If you are not sure, all we have to do is to pretend that we are travelling back a hundred years. Let us find out what it was like to be an Indian then.







A HUNDRED YEARS AGO





W e were not a free people a hundred years ago. Our rulers were the British who first came to trade but gradually, bit by bit, gained control of the whole country. They lived in India for nearly a hundred and fifty years but they remained foreigners to the last, unlike all other foreign people who had come to India before.



They took for themselves everything they could get from our land and our people, leaving the country in a poorer and more miserable condition than it had ever been before. How did we allow this to happen?

As you know, a weak body can be attacked by disease more easily than a strong one, and we had become weak. That is how the British could come in at all. They had wanted to come because India was famous for her riches. Many countries wanted to trade with her. To be rich and weak at the same time can be very dangerous, as you can well imagine. Once the country was in the grip of British power, things became worse and worse for the people. The wealth of this land was drained off and used for the benefit of a country thousands of miles away, by a people who looked down upon us and hardly regarded Indians as human.

In the hundred years between 1800 and 1900, more than 32 million people died because they had no food. That is more than the entire population of countries like Poland or Spain. Those who managed to live did not have enough to eat either. Famines became a part of everyday life. It was quite common for a famine to kill three million people. Things of this kind could not have happened if our British rulers had thought of Indian as human beings like themselves.

Famine and poverty were not all. Indians had to live in their own country feeling that they were inferior beings. They were not allowed to share the same parks, clubs, restaurants, and railway carriages as the British people who lived in India. The British did a hundred things to show their sense of superiority. They refused to be tried by Indian judges and did not allow



Indians to mix with them as equals. All the important jobs, all the high positions in India were held by Britons, not Indians. Even



the bravest Indian could not hope to be anything more than a havildar in the army. Even the cleverest and most able Indians were not given any responsible work to do. All important decisions about our country were taken not here but in London, by men who had no concern for the Indian people. All this hurt our people deeply. But they were afraid to do anything about it. Only

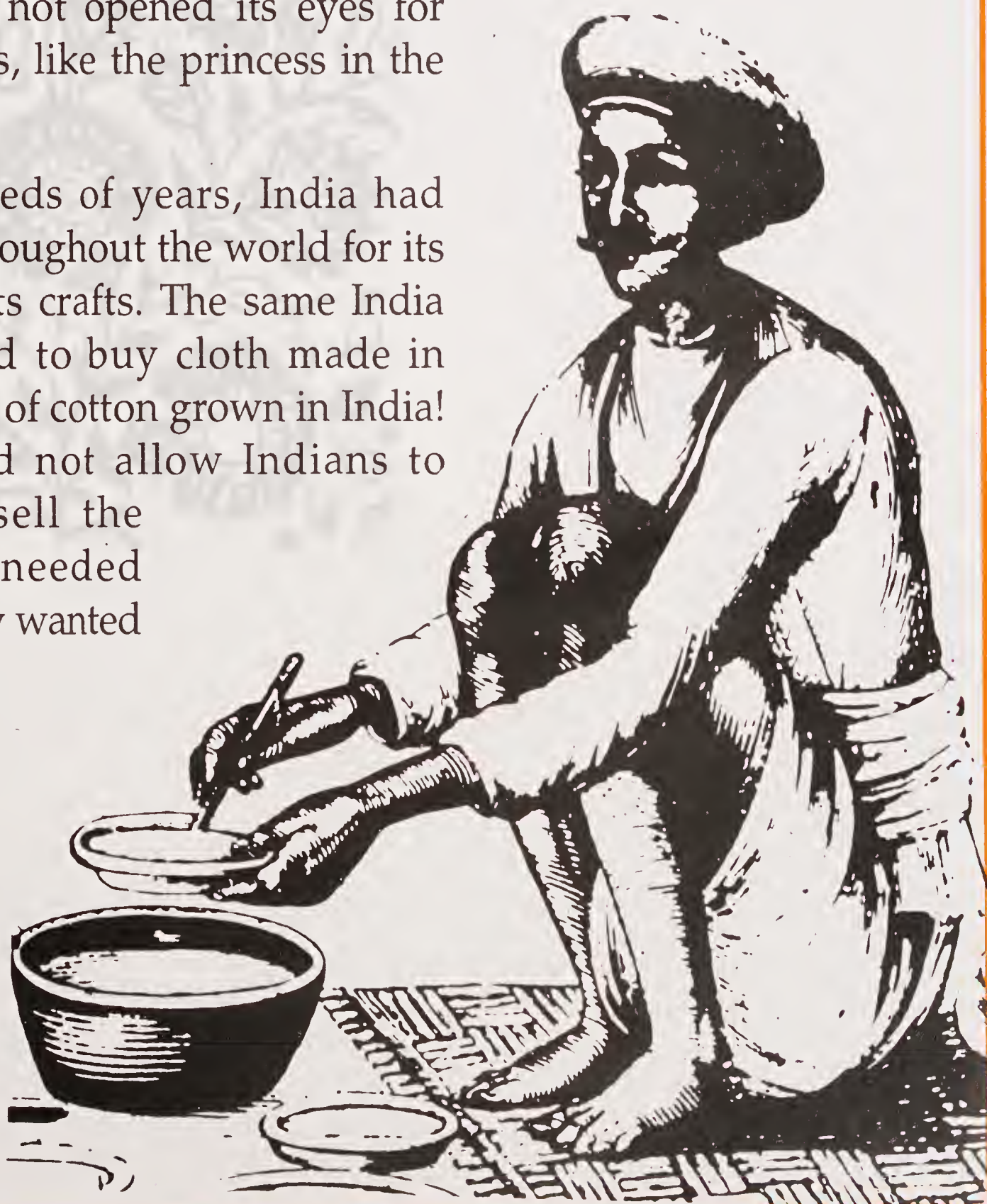




a few people had the courage to speak out in protest.

We were not allowed to go forward, but we did not stay where we were either. We slid backwards while the world went ahead. Countries of the West increased their wealth and comfort by using new machines to produce new things. People in other countries learnt more and more, as science advanced, and improved their lives in many ways. But we were left out of all this. Some Indians did try to set up a few factories, but the British Government always said "No" to any plans they made. The country might just as well have fallen fast asleep and not opened its eyes for many long years, like the princess in the fairy tale.

For hundreds of years, India had been famous throughout the world for its fine cloth and its crafts. The same India was now forced to buy cloth made in British mills out of cotton grown in India! The British did not allow Indians to produce and sell the things they needed themselves. They wanted all the profits for themselves. The fine work of Indian weavers and craftsmen suffered very





greatly because no one could buy what they made.

The world made progress, but the only machines the British allowed to come into India were those that would help them to keep control over this country. For instance, the railway engine. The British had to build railways, roads and bridges. Otherwise it would not have been possible for their officials to keep this vast country under their thumb.

Another thing the British did was to teach English to some Indians so that they could do small jobs for them. It was easier and much cheaper to produce clerks here than to have them shipped from England.







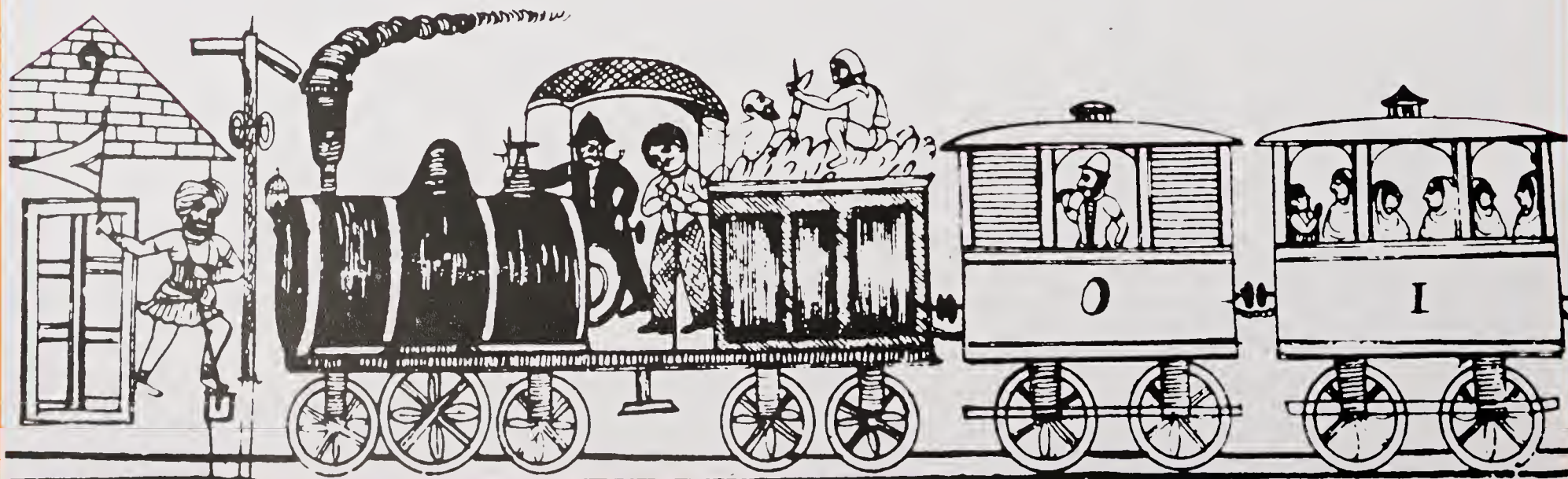
As you know, more than 80 out of every 100 Indians live in villages. The conditions of these people became very bad because there was no one to look after their needs. At the same time, the number of people in India began to grow very fast. This made things even worse, because there was nothing for them to share but more poverty and misery. What they ate to keep alive was such poor food that they became weaker and weaker and could fall ill very easily. Most of them were in debt and could hardly afford to eat. Epidemics and diseases became very common in the countryside, but only big cities had hospitals and doctors. In any case, the people had no money to pay for such things. The average Indian could hope to live only 27 years; he could not send his children to school; his home was no more than a mud



hut; and sometimes he did not even have clean water to drink. The cities were crowded with people who had no jobs and no money. Everything seemed dark, and without hope.

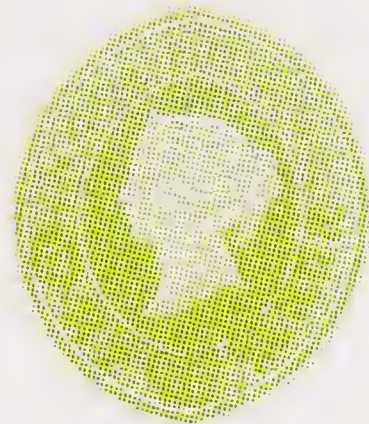
It should not surprise us that the British government only looked after the interests of Britain. After all, that was what they were here for; not to help us. How can a hunter have concern for his prey? But the affairs of men sometimes move in very strange ways. Without meaning to, the British made it much easier for us to shake them off and to free ourselves. Let us see how.

The vast network of railways, roads and postal services the British built so that they could rule the country brought the people closer to one another. Some Indians learnt the English language. This made it easy for them to talk amongst themselves, whether they came from north or south, east or west. Books and newspapers brought to them new ideas from countries of the West. These ideas were about the dignity of man, about freedom and equality. If all men were equal, why should one race use another for its own gain? Why should a foreign people look down upon us? And most important of all, why should we put up with it? The moment people asked themselves this question, they felt stronger.

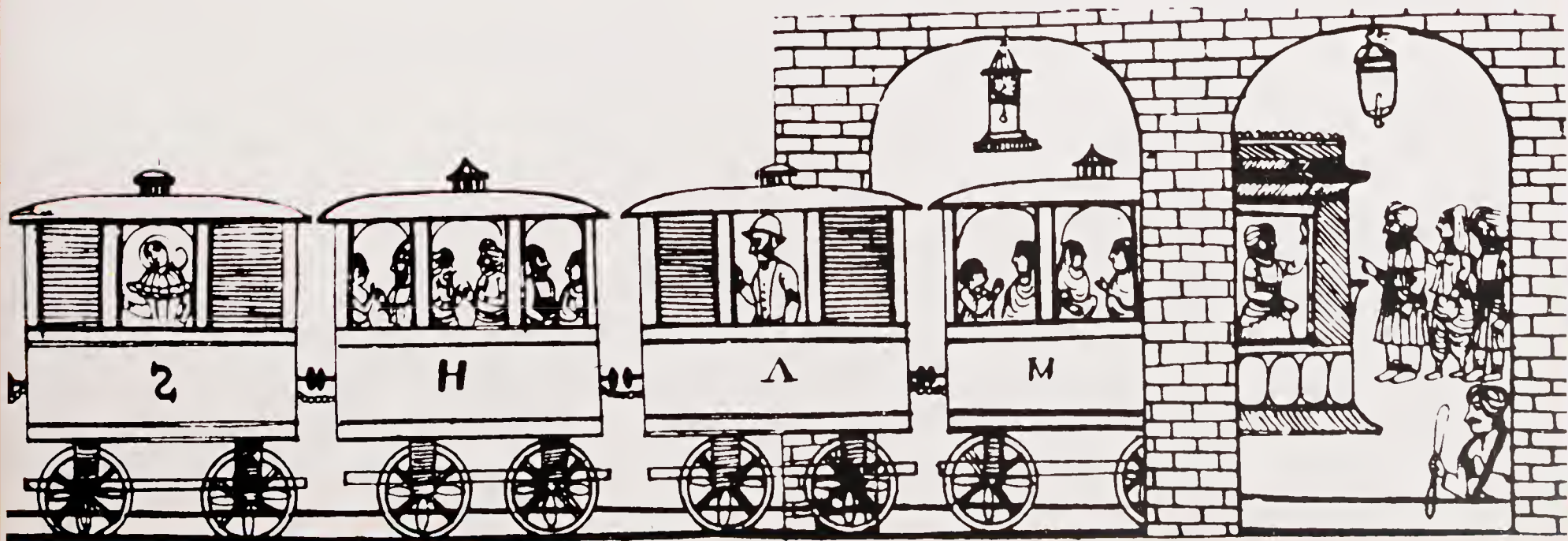




The British network helped to spread these ideas among the people of India. Our country now really began to wake up. The way people used to think began to change. More and more people began to say to themselves : "We too are somebody, and we too have rights! We shall live good lives, with dignity and in freedom; for we are as good as anyone else." Wanting to be free was just a part of this feeling. It was as if the country, which had been asleep and silent for so long, suddenly began to speak. At first it was just a whisper, but soon it became louder and louder until it was a roar which could not be ignored or brushed aside.



Great men rose to lead the people in one of the most remarkable struggles of recent times. Vivekananda, Tilak, and Tagore are names that Indians will always remember with gratitude. "We shall be free", they all said, each in his own different





way. And when the Indian people fought for their freedom, it was a very special kind of fighting, because they used no guns or swords.

VISVA-BHARATI  
SANTINIKETAN, BENGAL

Victim



You seemed from afar  
 Titanic in your mysterious majesty of terror.  
 With palpitating heart I stood before your presence.  
 Your knitted brow boded ill,  
 and suddenly ~~burst~~ <sup>burst</sup> down upon me  
 your blow with a crash.

My bones cracked,  
 with bowed head I waited for the final fury to come.

It came,  
 and I wondered if this was all of the menace?  
 With your weapon held <sup>high</sup> in suspense  
 you looked mightily big.

To ~~thrust~~ <sup>strike</sup> ~~me~~ you came down ~~with a crash~~  
 to where I crouched low on the ground.  
 You suddenly became small, and I stood up.

Great you are as death itself,  
 but your victim is greater than death.

From thence there was only pain for me  
 but no fear.

Rabindranath  
Tagore





6

HOW WE WON FREEDOM





More and more Indians began to talk about the terrible condition in which the country was, but nobody knew what we could do to change it. Just when everything in our country seemed dark, there came amongst us an extraordinary man. You have all heard of Gandhi, though none of you have seen him. He spoke simple and gentle words, but he showed the Indian people how they could win against the mighty British empire, even though they had no guns, no armies, and no wealth.



"First of all, do not be afraid", Gandhi said. "What are you afraid of? What can happen to you?" he asked. "You may go to prison, you may lose your house, your lands may be taken away, you may be punished. The worst is that you may be shot and killed. But what do these things matter? If you want freedom so much, all the hardships you have to put up with for the sake of that freedom will give you joy, not unhappiness; for you will know that you have suffered for a great and good cause." This is how Gandhi spoke to the people. Not everyone understood him very well, but there was such power and magic in his words and manner that thousands followed him wherever he went.

Thousands of people left their homes, their jobs, and their families to take part in Gandhi's work for freedom. Tens of thousands of young men and women carried the message of Gandhi to all parts of this vast country. Whoever heard his simple message, "Do not be afraid" was filled with courage. The new thing about this teaching was that it was not for one, or two, or three persons, but for millions of people together. This simple teaching, of course, made our people braver and better human



QUIT INDIA





beings than they had been before. But it also gave rise to a very great force in the country. When millions of people stop being afraid and stand together, ready to face anything for the sake of something they want very much, no power on earth can defeat them.

Gandhi's message spread like wildfire all over the country. Thousands of men and women flocked to him, willing to do anything he asked. Young people left schools and colleges, lawyers and doctors gave up their work, and many resigned their jobs to follow him. Most of our leaders of yesterday and today were among those followers — the Nehrus, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Sarojini Naidu, Rajagopalachari and many others. In a short time, a magical change came over the countryside. Even the poorest peasant, the most humble, the most lowly Indian began to feel strong and proud and full of hope. They stood erect, looked one straight in the eye and seemed altogether different from what they had been.

To Gandhi, the way we set about winning our freedom was as important as freedom itself. He did not believe in hurting anyone. Even hurting those he was fighting against was wrong, he felt. He did not hate the British, because to him hatred was also a kind of violence. How were these freedom fighters to fight then? With what weapons?

Well, what they could do was to refuse to obey any rule they considered unfair; to refuse to co-operate with the British Government; to refuse to buy anything that came from Britain; to go on writing and saying openly whatever they felt about British



HOUSE RAID

DUBLIN

40 Young Men

Arrested

President's Guard

ANDERSON'S RELATIONS

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

WAHABI RAID IN

IRAQ

British Planes Drop

Bombs

ARMY MEN KILLED

REVOLUTIONARY

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

REPARATIONS PAYMENTS

LOMBARDY

LOMBARDY

LOMBARDY

READY TO SELL

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

UNFINISHED REPORT

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

ST. ALBANS

BOYCOTT Foreign Cloth and Swear

Will be Within Your Grasp

MAHATMA'S ARREST AND

AFTER

Police Charge Crowd with Lathis

and Extinguish Bonfire



### INFUL TO WAIT ANY LONGER

It is common cause that, however disorganized, for the time being, insignificant, it may be, party of violence is gaining ground and making it felt. Its end is the same as mine. But I am convinced that it cannot bring the desired relief to dumb millions. And the conviction is growing deeper and deeper in me that nothing but unadvised non-violence can check the organized violence of the British Government. Many think that non-violence is not an active force. My experience, and though it undoubtedly is, shows that non-violence can be an intensely active force. It is my purpose to set in motion that force as well against organized violent force of the British rule as the organized violent force of the growing party of force. To sit still would be to give rein to both forces above mentioned. Having an unquestioning faith in the efficacy of non-violence, as I am, it would be sinful on my part to wait any longer. I know that in embarking on non-violence I am running what might fairly be termed a mad race without risks, often of the gravest character. A nation that has consciously or unconsciously preyed upon another, far more numerous, more ancient and no less cultured than itself, is in any amount of risk. I have deliberately used the word 'conversion'. My ambition is no less than to convert the whole people through non-violence, and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India. I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve them as I want to serve my own. I believe I have always served them. I served them up to the hilt. But when my eyes were opened and received non-co-operation, the object still was to serve them. I employed the same weapon that I used in all humbly successfully used against the members of my family. If I have equal for your people with mine, it will not long be hidden. It will be acknowledged by them.

## NO SUBMISSION BUT ULTIMATE INDEPENDENCE FLAG KEPT FLYING

### Gandhiji Defends Original Motion Moves Compromise Proposition

REAT OF N-C-O. IF NEHRU REPORT NOT ACCEPTED

### Iyengar Satisfied

#### ANDIT MALAVIYA AND DR. SANT WARN CONGRESSMEN AGAINST WEAKENING THEIR RANKS

Calcutta, Dec. 22.—The Congress Working Committee today rejected the proposal for a compromise resolution on the question of non-co-operation. The committee, which met in the evening, was presided over by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. The proposal, which was introduced by Mr. J. B. Kripalani, was for a compromise resolution which would have allowed the Congress to accept the Government's offer of a new constitution, while at the same time maintaining its demand for independence. The committee, however, decided to reject the proposal, and to reaffirm its original position of non-co-operation with the Government. The decision was met with great satisfaction by the members of the committee, and by the Congressmen present at the meeting.

Dr. Ambedkar, in his opening remarks, stressed the importance of maintaining the Congress's original position. He said that the Congress had been clear from the beginning that its goal was independence, and that it would not accept any compromise that would weaken its ranks. He said that the Congressmen present at the meeting were all in agreement with this position, and that they would all support the decision to reject the compromise resolution.

Mr. Kripalani, in his introduction of the compromise resolution, had argued that it was necessary for the Congress to accept the Government's offer of a new constitution, in order to bring about a peaceful transition to independence. He said that the Congress should not allow itself to be divided by the Government's offer, and that it should instead accept the offer and work towards achieving independence through peaceful means.

Dr. Ambedkar, in his reply to Mr. Kripalani, said that the Congress had no choice but to reject the compromise resolution. He said that the Congress had been clear from the beginning that its goal was independence, and that it would not accept any compromise that would weaken its ranks. He said that the Congressmen present at the meeting were all in agreement with this position, and that they would all support the decision to reject the compromise resolution.

Mr. Kripalani, in his reply to Dr. Ambedkar, said that he was satisfied with the decision to reject the compromise resolution. He said that he was confident that the Congress would continue to work towards achieving independence through peaceful means, and that he was confident that the Congress would continue to maintain its original position of non-co-operation with the Government.

Dr. Ambedkar, in his closing remarks, said that the Congress had made a wise decision to reject the compromise resolution. He said that the Congress had been clear from the beginning that its goal was independence, and that it would not accept any compromise that would weaken its ranks. He said that the Congressmen present at the meeting were all in agreement with this position, and that they would all support the decision to reject the compromise resolution.

Mr. Kripalani, in his final remarks, said that he was confident that the Congress would continue to work towards achieving independence through peaceful means, and that he was confident that the Congress would continue to maintain its original position of non-co-operation with the Government.

Dr. Ambedkar, in his final remarks, said that he was confident that the Congress would continue to work towards achieving independence through peaceful means, and that he was confident that the Congress would continue to maintain its original position of non-co-operation with the Government.





rule; and to go on drawing more and more people into this movement. Hundreds of thousands of people were beaten with lathis, put in jail, and made to suffer, but they cheerfully put up with all this. They did not hit back, for Gandhi had taught them that that was not the way to fight. As soon as they were set free from jail, they acted exactly as before and were arrested again. They knew they were not being punished for some disgraceful thing they had done; they knew they were in the right and that

**Amrita Bazar Patrika**  
SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 1944

## THEY WALK OUT OF THE PRISON

**MOULANA AZAD RELEASED**

Nehru, Patel, Desai, Kripalani & Shukla Also Set Free

The Congress President, Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, was released at 4 p.m. today, following the release of other Congress leaders. The release of the leaders was a significant event, as they had been in prison for several months. The release was a result of the British government's decision to release the leaders as part of a general amnesty. The release of the leaders was a significant event, as they had been in prison for several months. The release was a result of the British government's decision to release the leaders as part of a general amnesty.



Maulana Azad      Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru      Dr. B.R. Ambedkar      Pt. J.B. Kripalani      Pt. Rajendra Prasad      Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

**FALLS SHORT ON CRISIS OFFER**  
(Continued from Page 1)

**NO COMMENT BY GANDHI**  
(Continued from Page 1)

**RE: THREE MEETINGS**  
The release of the leaders was a significant event, as they had been in prison for several months. The release was a result of the British government's decision to release the leaders as part of a general amnesty.

of they were brave people, heroes of the Indian nation. They themselves were glad that they had been able to do something for what they believed in.

There were some Indians who could not help hating the British for their cruelty to our people. They were so angry that they wanted to take revenge for each unfair thing the British and their officers did. They threw bombs, overturned trains, and killed, since they believed that the British must be made to suffer in return for what they had done in India. You might have heard of



Bhagat Singh, who threw a bomb in the Central Assembly, and made no effort to run away when he was spotted. Nor did he try to save himself, although he had a gun. He was sentenced to death when he was only in his twenties. He cheerfully walked up to the gallows and put the noose round his neck with his own hands. There were many like him in India.

Another person you must know about is Subhas Chandra Bose, or Netaji as he is called. While Gandhi was fighting the British from within the country, Netaji wanted to fight from outside. So he escaped and built up an Indian army abroad. Most

## N.A. TRIAL OPENS IN RED FORT

N.A.'s WOMEN WARRIORS



Members of the Band of Women Warriors of the I.N.A. with their rifles.

SHAH NAWAZ



DHILLON



SAHGAL



DEFENCE COUNSEL



Defence counsel on the I.N.A. trial stand with the I.N.A. trial judge, Pandit Jaganmohan Lal Saxena, the I.N.A. trial judge, Mr. Jaganmohan Lal Saxena, and the I.N.A. trial judge, Mr. Jaganmohan Lal Saxena.

FIGHT OF GUN BATTLES IN  
BATAVIA

FISH WARN ANNAMITES OF  
REPRISALS

WELSH L. GENERAL CHRISTOPHER'S WARNING THAT  
ARMY OF MODERN WAR WOULD BE USED BY THOSE  
WHOSE IN HIS REPRISALS WOULD FOLLOWING 2  
GEN BATTLES IN THE STREETS OF BATAVIA, SAYS  
7. 10. 44. CHRISTOPHER

CHARGES OF MURDER AND  
WAGING WAR AGAINST KING

DEFENCE ASKS FOR THREE WEEKS'  
ADJOURNMENT

(By the Defence Solicitor-General)

NEW DELHI, Monday.—A trial unprecedented in British

Syria A Potential Trouble  
Spot In Mid-East

LONDON, Nov. 10.—With the 20th day's spotlight on France, the 21st day's spotlight is on Syria, a dangerous and volatile area of the Middle East, a region where the shadow of the British Empire is still visible in the shadows of the British Empire.

Curfew On Road  
Traffic Tightened  
In Palestine

Jerusalem, Nov. 10.—A curfew on the roads in Palestine has been tightened in view of the recent disturbances in the region.

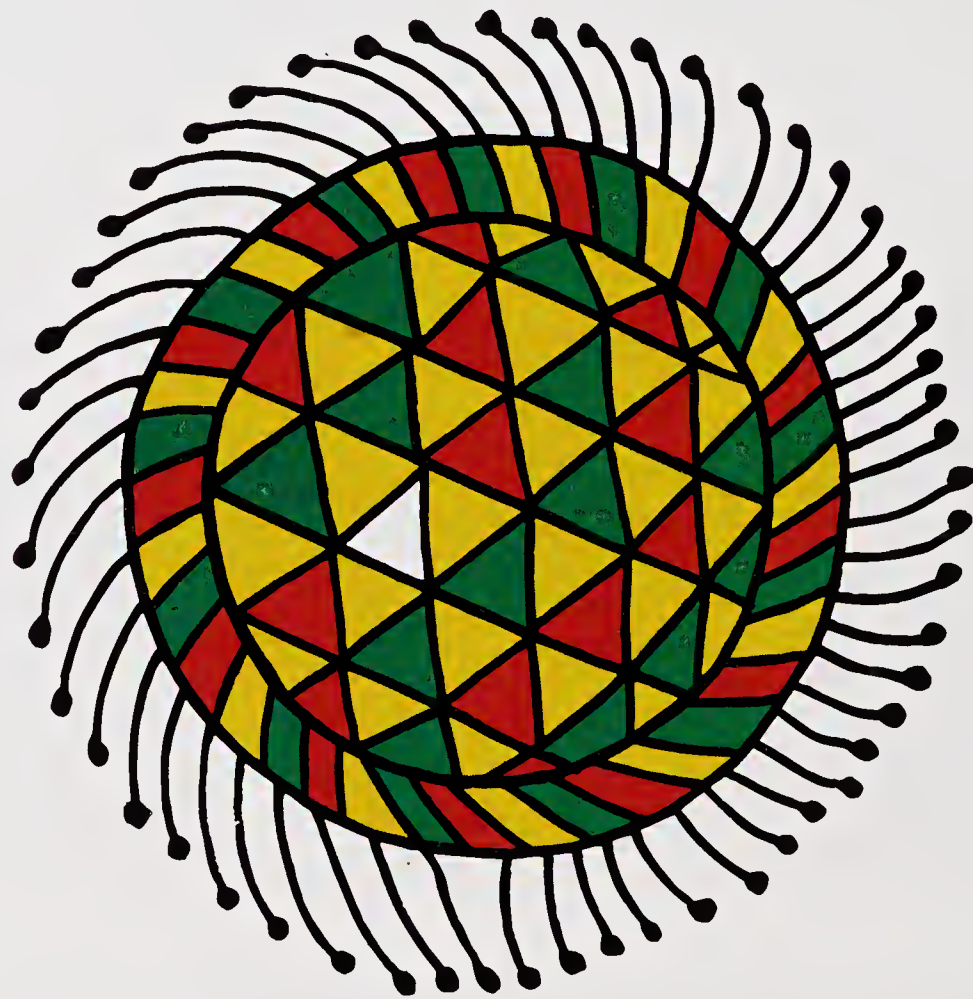
of the fighters in this army were prisoners of war who were outside the country at the time. Britain was at war with Germany and Japan; so Netaji's Indian National Army joined Britain's enemies and fought against the British forces.

Gandhi, Subhas Bose, and revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, adopted different ways of fighting the British; but in one way they were all the same. Each had great love for the country and great courage.

To give up things, to suffer, to have no needs of one's own,



all this became everyday behaviour for a very large number of Indians. Stories of bravery, sacrifice, and love for India began to be told everywhere. More people became national heroes than at any other time. It was indeed an age of glory for us, a time we like to think of again and again.



In the long years while India was waiting for freedom, Nehru dreamed of a future where the Indian people, the peasants, the workers, the small shopkeepers, specially in the villages, would have a better life. He made many plans in advance that would improve the condition of these people. He wanted to make use of science and the new knowledge of the world so that the people of this country would benefit. Nehru had other dreams



India will find herself again when freedom opens out new horizons and the future will then fascinate her far more than the immediate past of frustration and humiliation. She will go forward with confidence, rooted in herself and yet eager to learn from others and cooperate with them. Today she swings between a blind adherence to her old customs and a slavish imitation of foreign ways. In neither of these can she find relief or life or growth. It is obvious that she has to come out of her shell and take full part in the life and activities of the modern age. It should be equally obvious that there can be no real cultural or spiritual growth based on imitation.

Jawaharlal Nehru



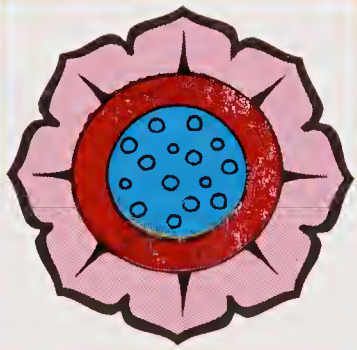
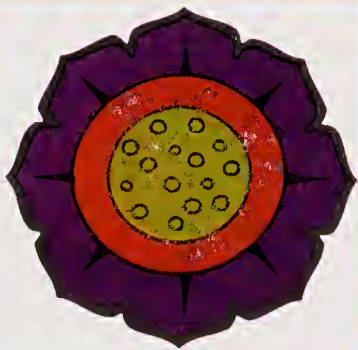
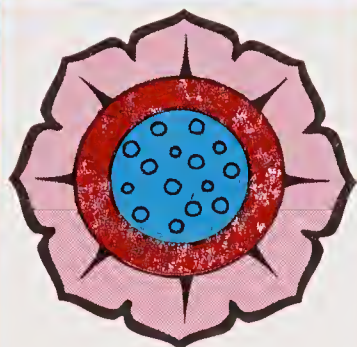
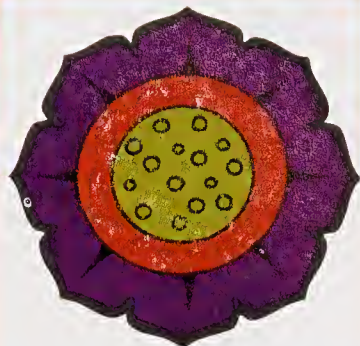
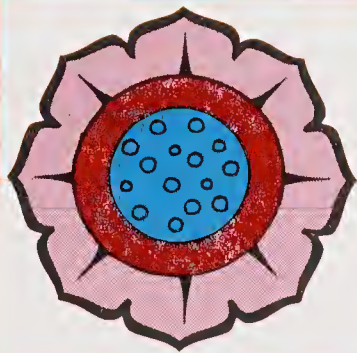
too: a world in which India would one day have a place of honour; a time when the nations of the world would listen to India's voice and learn from whatever wisdom she had to offer.

Jawaharlal Nehru thought of foreign rule as an obstacle that came in the way of all his dreams for India's future. This obstacle had therefore to be removed, whatever the cost. Nehru became a very great leader of the Indian people. The country you and I live in today is Nehru's India, and the nation is still busy trying to make the dreams Nehru dreamed for India come true.

A whole generation of Indians gave up everything and spent their lives in fighting the British in Gandhi's way, without hurting, without violence, without hatred. The hope that India would one day be free kept them going through very difficult times and gave them courage. When millions of people want the same thing very much, it is a great force, which even the most powerful army cannot oppose. A time came when the British had no choice but to withdraw from India. They had been defeated by the will of the people. Not a single shot had been fired by Gandhi's freedom fighters. India became a free country on August 15, 1947.







7

A HOUSE OF OUR OWN





It was wonderful to be free. A dream had come true. But it was only three-fourths of a dream. The country had been split up into India and Pakistan. We had to agree to this, because it seemed the only way to get rid of British rule. Before we became free, some



Muslim leaders began to say that the Muslims were a separate nation and should therefore have a separate country of their own called Pakistan. Those who wanted Pakistan began to fight with others who wanted India to remain undivided. There were bitter arguments and terrible riots. At last it was agreed that certain parts of India would be carved out to form Pakistan. When the British finally left, the old Indian map had been cut up into three. The largest chunk in the middle was what remained of India, and two bits to the east and west, separated by a thousand miles, were to form the new state of Pakistan. Those people in the two wings of Pakistan who thought of themselves as Indians, and not as Pakistanis, left their homes in panic and poured into India. There were nearly eight million of them. Other people left India and went to live in Pakistan, but their number was much smaller.

The refugees who came from Pakistan had nowhere to go, no homes, no food, no jobs. Men and women of all classes, rich people, poor people, middling people, peasants, workers, merchants, teachers, doctors, just left





everything they had and fled to the Indian side of the border. To help eight million people to settle and start a normal life once again is not a small matter. It was like suddenly having all the people of a country of the size of Greece, or Bulgaria, to look after. And this had to be done first, before we took up anything else.





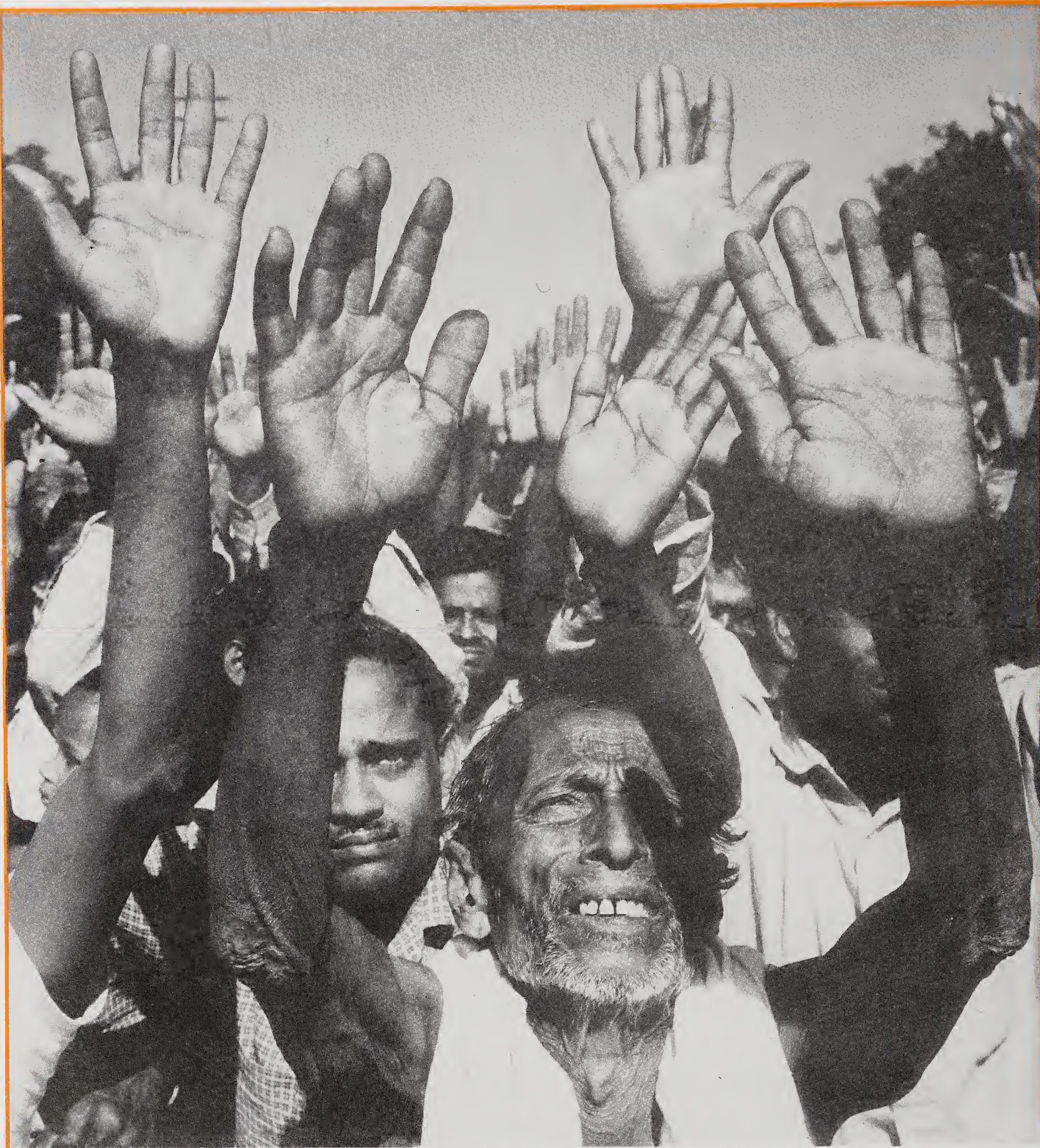
No country in the world has had as many refugees to settle as India.

This was not the only difficulty caused by the partition of the country. Some of our most fertile lands had become part of a foreign country. This meant that India was not only smaller than it had been during the days of the British, but also poorer.

Somehow or other we had to make up for this. If we didn't, the whole point in becoming free would be lost. Now that we were on our own at last, there was no excuse for not thinking of the millions of poor people in India. Freedom by itself was of no use to them. They could not eat it instead of food; or wear it in the place of clothes; even the good feeling that came with freedom could not last for ever. The question that our leader had been worrying about all through the freedom struggle was now right in front of our eyes. Free, but free to do what?

The main thing was to give the common people of this country a better life, and something to look forward to. Enough food, better food, clean water to drink, better houses, more money, schools for everyone, colleges for those who wanted them, doctors and hospitals for whoever needed them, jobs for all, some time for rest, and some for play. All these things seem very ordinary to you because you are much better off than most people in this country; for one thing, you can read. When we became independent, only fifteen people out of a hundred could read or write, and this included the grown-ups as well. You also have enough to eat. When we became free most Indians did not have even one rupee a day to spend on food.





Another reason why we had wanted the British to leave was that it hurt our pride and our sense of self-respect not to be able to run our own affairs. We wanted to do things ourselves



because only then could we do them in our own way. And unless we did them in our own way, the people of India would not have been able to take part in this effort. Unless they took part, our country could not have gone forward very much. Even when we were fighting for our independence, our only strength was the people and their determination. This remained true in our fight for a better life too.

The country was in no position to distribute the good things of life to everybody the moment we were free. We had first to have more before we could distribute anything. Only the people who work could give our country more wealth, by producing more — whether on the land, or in factories, or in workshops.

India was the house we lived in, and we were determined to improve it. But there was something we had to do before we started cleaning and repairing and putting in more comforts through hard work. We had first to make sure that the building of our house was strong enough to stand; secondly that no rooms in it were locked up. At the time India became independent, there were nearly 600 states ruled by Rajas and Maharajas under the protection of the British. Some of these were very big, like Hyderabad and Kashmir. Others were tiny estates of just a few square miles. Most of the princes of the states lived in great luxury while their people had hardly enough to eat. Each state had different rules and laws. Each ruler could take whatever decision he pleased. This meant that the Indians who lived in these princely states, as they were called, had a different kind of life from the rest of the people. We wanted all Indians to be together, to be equal, to share the same life. In the house of India, we could not afford to have rooms that were locked up.



Many of the princes did not like the idea of giving up their states because it meant the end of their grand way of living, and of their power over the people who lived in their states. Because of the tact and firmness of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, all the princely states within India became part of free India, and that too in less than two years. On the whole there was no bitterness or fighting.





The princely state of Kashmir had the choice of joining either India or Pakistan, because it had common borders with both. Finally Kashmir decided to join India. Pakistan did not like this decision and sent in thousands of raiders to attack the valley, hoping to influence the people and to take Kashmir by force. This was the first attack on independent India, but we were able to beat back the raiders.

The three big jobs of settling the refugees from Pakistan, making the princely states a part of India, and defending Kashmir, used up a lot of our energy, time, and money. The great task of building a proper house for the people of India to live in was our real work. But we could not take it up as soon as we would have liked to.

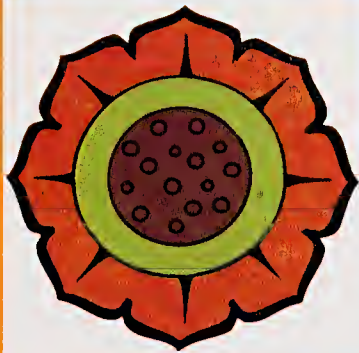
Building a proper house for the people of India was a giant task to start with. But it had become more difficult. The number of people we had to provide for had more than doubled since the days of the British. Most of what we had had been taken away in the hundred and fifty years of foreign rule. Our people were poor, uneducated and untrained for skilled jobs. They spoke many different languages and were spread out over a vast area. Most of them lived on the land, but the soil had become poorer and poorer and yielded less and less. All these were great difficulties in our way, but now we knew that we could solve any problem that arose, if only we made up our minds. We had tested ourselves. Had we not done difficult things before? We had won freedom from the British, made the princely states a part of India, successfully defended Kashmir, and settled eight million refugees. To carry on from there was difficult, certainly, but not impossible.



This is how most Indians felt. But there were some who were not so hopeful. Many people in other countries thought that India had very little chance of doing well and that only a miracle could bring success.







THE WAY FINDER





Have you ever lost your way? If not, you are a very rare person. Most people, at some time or the other, do lose their way. They might take the wrong turning by mistake and then have great difficulty in finding the right place. Lighthouses are used to warn ships during storms in the night. We in cities and towns are guided by street signs,



by buildings or other landmarks that we recognize. A lonely traveller in the jungle tries to check the direction in which he is going by looking at the position of the stars, the sun, or the moon. The driver of a bullock cart going from village to town sometimes even goes to sleep because he is sure that the road he has taken leads exactly to where he wants to go. People need to know where they are going. Everyone who goes from one place to another has to make sure in some way that the direction he has taken is the right one, specially if he has no time to lose, and no energy to waste.

Once freedom had been won, India had to travel a long way; from terrible poverty to a point where every Indian would be free from need. And she certainly could not afford to waste time or energy. You all know that there are many ways of making money. One can steal, rob, work, beg, borrow, cheat, win a lottery, or find a buried treasure. If it was only a question of one person, he could decide for himself which of these ways he would like to try. But what about a country with millions of people? Wouldn't the people of that country have to decide which of these ways of becoming richer they would like to follow? If a dozen of you were trying to move a big rock and each one pushed in a different direction, the rock would not move at all. But if you all decided which way to push and together said "One, two, three, go!" the rock would begin to roll forward at a great pace. The country could uplift itself only if all its citizens agreed to pull their weight in the same direction. That is why it was absolutely necessary for the Indian people to choose a way together and to follow it together.

India did choose a way before starting on her long journey



to a better life. The Indian people gave themselves a sort of light to guide them in case they got lost, something that would always remind them of what they had set out to do. This light or guiding star was our Constitution. In this important document, we put in all the things we believed in, all the things we wanted to do, the particular way in which we wanted to do them and also the way in which we would govern our country. You might say that the Indian Constitution is the sacred book of modern India, the book



हम भारतके लोग भारतको  
समस्त नागरिकों को  
विश्वास धर्म और उ  
फ्त करने तथा उन  
ने वाली बंधुता ब  
सभा में एतद्वारा इस संविधान

that guides us in every decision and, like a parent, looks after us as we wish to be looked after.

What does the Constitution say? First, that everything in this country shall be decided by the people and that for India, the



will of the people would be the most important thing always. Secondly, that every citizen of India would have a right to justice, liberty, and equality and that this right would be looked after by the State. Every individual would be treated with respect and dignity and the State would try to promote a feeling of brotherhood or fraternity among the peoples of India so that the unity of the nation was never in danger.

समपूर्ण प्रभुत्व सम्पन्न लोकतन्त्रात्मक गणराज्य बनाने तथा उसके  
 नाजिक प्रार्थिक और राजनैतिक न्याय विचार अभिव्यक्ति  
 सना की स्वतंत्रता प्रतिष्ठा और प्रवक्ता की समता प्रा-  
 में व्यक्ति की गरिमा और राष्ट्र की एकता सुरक्षित कर-  
 के लिये दृढ़ संकल्प होकर अपनी इस संविधान  
 प्रणीत अधिनियमित और आत्मार्पित करते हैं।

An important part of the Constitution deals with what are known as Fundamental Rights, rights with which each Indian citizen is born and which no one can deny or take away. It is your fundamental right to think, believe, and say what you like, and



to follow any religion you please. You are as good as any one else so far as the law is concerned. No one can be unfair to you because you belong to a particular caste. No one can refuse to give you a job because you are a woman and not a man. No one can deny you a place in a school only because you follow a particular religion. The law is the same for everyone, whether he is big or small, important or unimportant, rich or poor.

If a person feels that the Government has been unfair to him, it is not the end of the matter. He can go to a court of law and have his right given back to him, if he has really been treated unfairly. The judiciary, which has high courts in all the States, is independent of the Government. Above the high court is the Supreme Court, which can examine a case again if an appeal is made to it. There are hundreds of cases in which the law has decided against the Government and in favour of an ordinary person. No one need feel helpless.

You know very well that this was not always the state of affairs in India. The British people when they were here refused to be tried by Indian judges. Very few Indians had the right to vote. The people had no power to take any decisions for the country. Nor could they say freely what they felt. If they did, they were put in prison.

Even before the British came, things were pretty bad in this respect. All Indians were certainly not equal. Some had much more money and power than others. Even in those days, the poor were used by the rich for their own gain. Each part of the country had different rules and laws. Much of what happened to poor people depended on the whim and fancy of persons who



happened to be in high positions. People of different religions did not mix too freely amongst themselves. Some groups were thought of as 'untouchables' and treated badly by other Indians. A person born poor had very little chance of improving his conditions. Most people accepted what they had because they thought it was their fate.





Our Constitution is trying to change all this. The fate of the Indian people will now be whatever they themselves want to make it. Their desires and their dreams will be as important as their needs in the India we are going to build. Not a single Indian, however humble, will be brushed aside.

Where did these fine and noble ideals of freedom, equality and justice, of fair play and fellow-feeling come from? they came from within ourselves, that is, from our own experience as well as from outside, or the experience of other countries.

Just as thirsty people think of water, so we thought of freedom during the days of the British. Many years before we actually became independent, our leaders declared that it was the right of the Indian people, as of other nations, to be free; to enjoy the results of their hard work, and to have all the basic needs of life so that they had the chance to grow and improve themselves. They felt this very strongly because they saw with their own eyes that the very opposite was happening. Gandhiji's concern for the people of this country was so great that he said he would not rest until he had wiped "every tear from every eye".

Jawaharlal Nehru reminded us, just before independence, that India had always been a land of many faiths and many religions in the past. So it would remain in the future, he said. All faiths and religions would be equally honoured and respected. But each Indian, whatever his religion, would have the same loyalty towards the nation and the same national outlook. This is what we mean by a secular approach.

All the main beliefs and feelings of the people who led



India to freedom and wanted her to make rapid progress have found a place in our Constitution.

We also came in touch with thoughts of freedom, equality, justice and the dignity of the individual through thinkers from Western countries who inspired many struggles for liberty in the last hundred and fifty years. We took for our Constitution whatever we thought was noblest and most worthwhile, whatever we thought would suit us and whatever we seemed to need most. This work of making a Constitution took about three years. After this, when all these ideas had been put together, the people formally decided to let them be India's pilot for the future. The Constitution came into force on January 26, 1950 and India became a Republic. It was an important day and we celebrate the birthday of our Republic every year with great joy.

One very special thing about our Constitution is that it has what are known as the Directive Principles of State Policy. Just as the rest of the Constitution shows us the road we must follow, the Directive Principles show us a picture of the place we have ultimately to reach. This vision of what we are aiming at is a great help in laying down policies for the future.

The Directive Principles ask the State to work for an India where the good of the people is the main consideration, and where every Indian is equal in all matters, whether they be of wealth, power, or the chance to do better. In other words, we are trying to build up an India where there are no classes, no castes, and no divisions of any sort, and where everyone shares equally in everything. Like most worthwhile things, this is much easier to say than to achieve. But to say it, where it has never been said



before, to accept it and to follow it as an ideal is in itself a very big step forward.

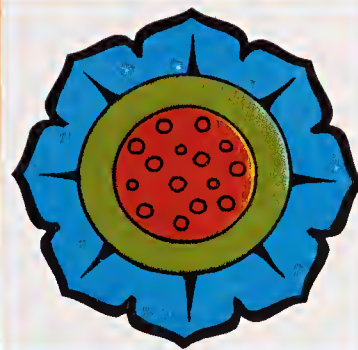
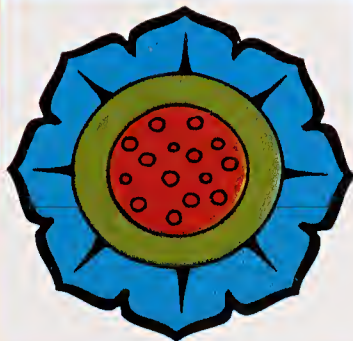
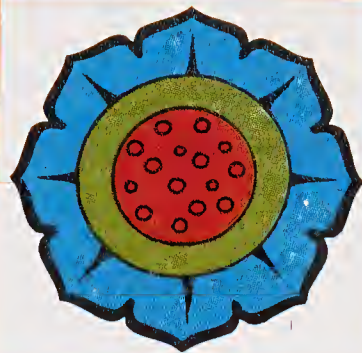
Our Constitution says that the will of the people shall be above everything else. How do the people express this will? They do so by choosing a person to represent them and to speak on their behalf, all the way from the village Panchayat up to the Houses of Parliament. Every grown-up person has a say in how the country shall be run. Nothing can happen unless most of the people want it. This is a great thing for a country which has so long been oppressed by kings and foreign rulers.

Our first general elections under the new Constitution were held in the year 1952. We had to elect altogether 4,400 representatives for Parliament and the State Assemblies. As many as 176 million people voted. Many of them could not read or write. The world had never known an election in which so many people took part. However, everybody was full of pride for the peaceful and fair manner in which the elections were held. Five years later, when the time came to hold elections again, there were 20 million more voters, but the elections went off smoothly again.

By now it was clear that we had successfully planted the seeds of democracy in our country.



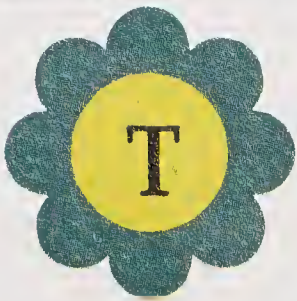




9

OUR KIND OF PLAN





hink of a poor family where one of the children falls sick. Doctors and medicines cost a lot of money, but to get the sick child well again is naturally the most important thing for the family.



If they use up all their money this way, what happens when they get hungry? If the sick child has to starve when he is well, he might easily fall ill again. If the father is starved, he cannot work, or provide anything for the family. If the mother gets no food, she cannot cook or clean or look after her husband and children.

So they must all have food. They must also have clothes. If some of the children go to school, they must have books. The father must have some money to get to his place of work. Even if he doesn't have to go far, he may have to buy the tools and implements he needs for his work.

There are hundreds of other things a family needs — shoes, rugs, soap, combs, a transistor radio, a bicycle, blankets, a *jharoo*, a newspaper, cooking pots, new clothes, and so on. Now and then the father may also want to take the family to a cinema show; the mother may want to buy a flower vase to make her home more beautiful; the children may want a new football, or a present for a friend or a visit to a new place.

Now, all these things the family wants are important but not equally important. Some are absolutely necessary and needed at once; some are things which one could wait for, although they would be useful if one had them; the rest are things one could easily do without, even though it would be very pleasant to have them. This last group of things are luxuries. Poor people cannot afford luxuries.

The necessities, or things which one cannot do without, have all to come out of the little money that the family earns each month. To make sure that nothing important gets left out, they



must make a plan and decide beforehand how they are going to spend their money — how much on food, how much on clothes, how much on the house, how much on other things. The more details they think about and decide on beforehand, the better their plan. For instance, when they say: "We shall spend so much





on food", they must think not only of the vegetables they grow or buy from the market, but also of the oil needed for cooking, the cost of the fuel for the *choolah*, the pots and pans, of the time they can spend on worrying about food, and of who will do what, and when. Even in the most careful households, food sometimes gets burnt, or spoilt, and has to be thrown away. If the family does not take such accidents into account while making their plan, they will probably end up by spending more on food than they had put aside for it.

There are two kinds of plans one can make. One is to make arrangements to see that you go on getting the most important things you need. The family we have been talking about cannot do without food and clothes and medicines. So every month they make a budget and decide to spend a fixed amount on each of these things. They do not have enough money to think of other things which would make their lives more comfortable or more cheerful. Therefore, they do not put them into their budget at all. Every month, year after year, they go on in the same way. They stay where they were. There is no trip to a new place, no new ball, no new books to look at. The family just manages to keep itself going, but things don't get better for them in any way. This is one kind of plan the family can make.

The second kind of plan is to aim at something better than you have today. You may not be able to get it straightway, but you can make plans so that you do have it some time later. How long you have to wait depends on how far you are from what you want, how hard you are willing to work for it, how much help you get in your efforts, what you are prepared to give up for the sake of the thing you want.



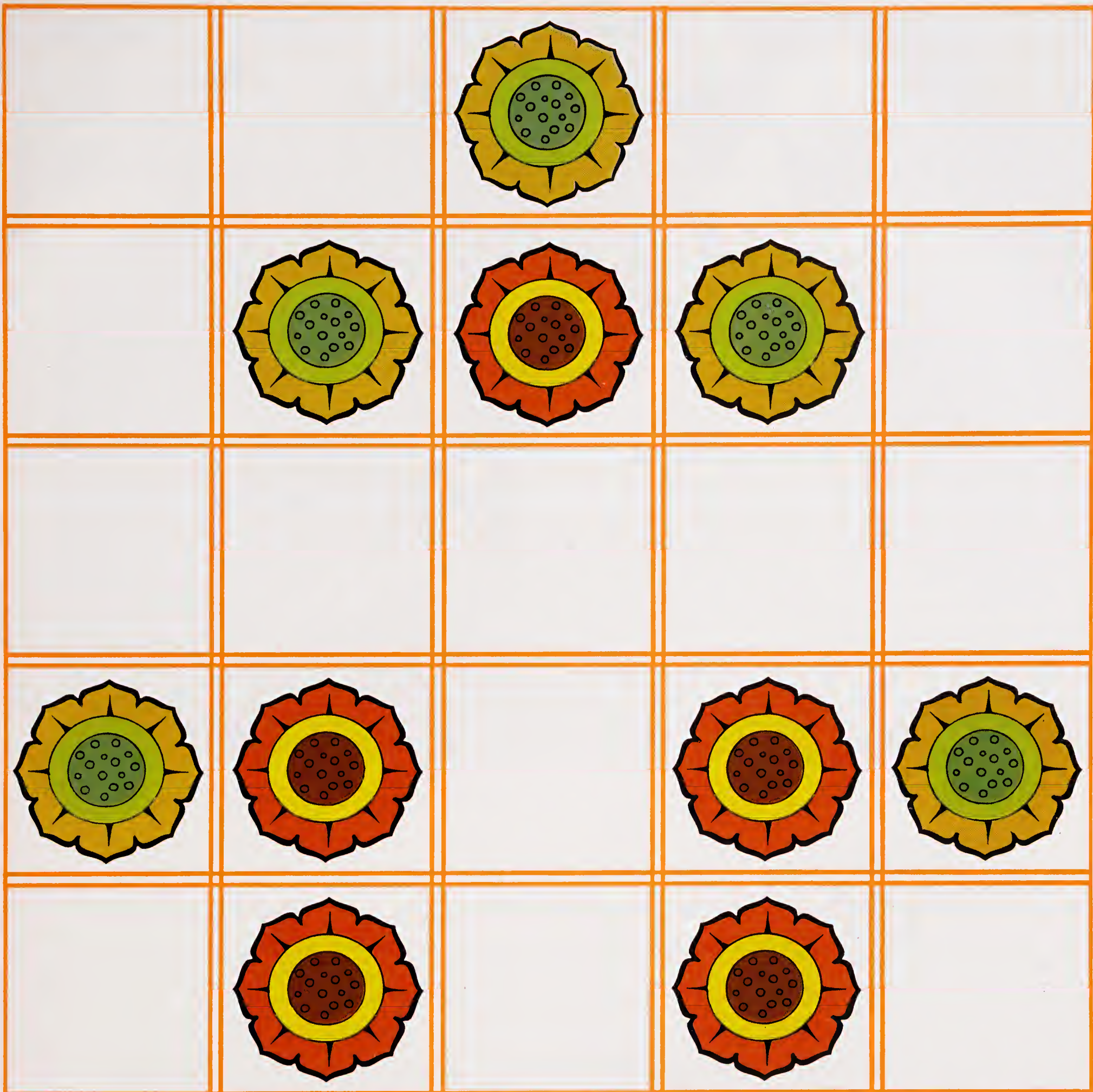
If there is something you cannot afford to buy today you could start saving every paisa you can, so that one day you would have enough to buy it. Better still, you could perhaps make it yourself, with your own hands. Of course, you would then have to spend some of your money on arrangements for making it. Part of these arrangements might be to go to a place where you could learn how to make it, and to get the materials you need.

If you were successful, then perhaps you could make this thing for others too. They would share your fun and also learn from you how to make it themselves. Soon, this thing would become quite easy to get, and therefore cost much less. Children younger than you would then have to pay much less for it than you. If this happened in the case of many things, would it not mean that the life of many people had become better in some way?

It is this second kind of plan that India made for herself, as soon as she was free. The Indian people did not want to stay at the level at which they were, but to improve their lives.







10

WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE KING





You already know that we were very far from what we wanted, because most of our people did not even have the basic necessities, the things each human being needs just to keep himself alive and healthy. There were also a very large number of people in India to be looked after, and the number was increasing every day. We were a very poor country and had no stocks of money piled up which we could distribute. In any case, how long would it have lasted, even if we had money stored away somewhere?

Our job was very difficult indeed, and our plan would have to be a very complicated one. It was clear that each person would have a particular job to do and they would have to do it very well.



The simplest way of making sure that something gets done is to give orders, the way an army commander does. Even the head of the family can sometimes lay down the law and say "You shall do this", and "you shall not do that", especially in important matters. In many families such orders are obeyed without question. We could have done things this way in India also. The Government could have been a dictator and just ordered people to do whatever had to be done. It could have punished those who did not obey. That way things would have improved much faster, and nothing in our plans could have gone wrong. But our people felt that this was not a good way for us. We did not believe in doing things out of fear, or because we were forced to do them.

Do you like being ordered to do things for your family? Would'nt you rather do them on your own, because you understand what needs to be done and want to help? Surely you would like to be treated like a grown-up person and made to feel that it is your family and therefore your problem also. Of course, in this way things could go wrong. You might be selfish and not care about anybody else. You might take too long to decide, and a good chance may be lost. But if your



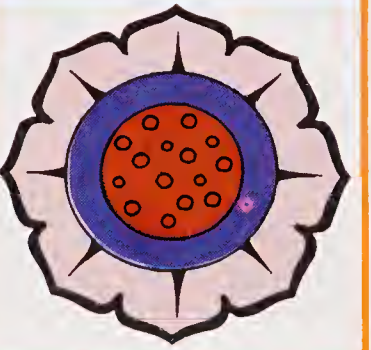
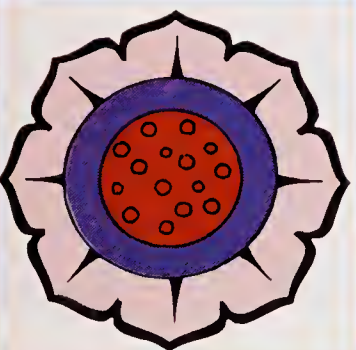
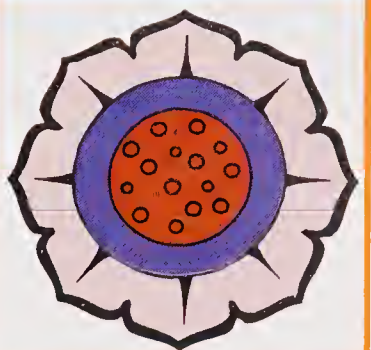
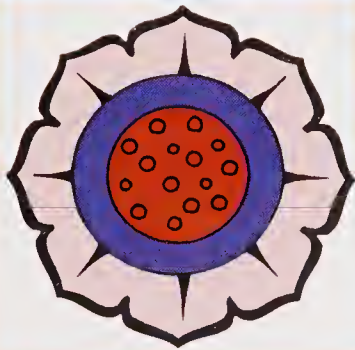
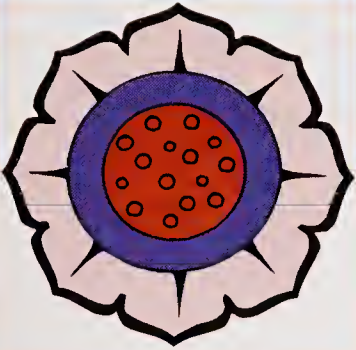


family believed that you were one of them and trusted you, they would gladly take this risk. In fact they would not think of it as a risk at all.

This is the way India has also chosen. We have decided that the best way of doing things is to let the people discuss all the problems of the country amongst themselves and make up their minds how they want to tackle them. Normally it takes more time if each Indian has to make decisions before anything is made final, but we still believe that this is the best way of doing things, even though it is a slower way. This way that we have chosen to take our country forward is called democratic planning, because here the will of the people is the real ruler of the country.

Why do we regard this as the best way? Because we know that quick success is not all we want. What is the use of giving our people more things if they feel that they themselves do not count, that nobody cares about their views and opinions, that they are still being ruled by others? The whole purpose of freedom and planning is to give the Indian people a sense of well being. Even if we are not able to build factories and bridges and dams as fast as we would if we chose some other way, we shall be building something much more important — our people. If they have to take important decisions for themselves, they will grow and become stronger from within. This inner strength is the most valuable treasure of any country.





11

THE IMPORTANCE OF WANTING THINGS





Something to eat, something to wear and somewhere to live — these are things that everyone must have. Even wild animals eat and live. Somehow they find their own food; they wear their skins or their fur or feathers, and build homes for themselves. But human beings need much more.



You might have seen a crooked tree that could not grow straight because something came in its way. Or a plant that could not flower because it did not have enough sun or water, or because the soil in which it grew was not good enough. This kind of thing can happen to persons also if they do not get the things they need, besides food, clothing and shelter. It can happen, and is still happening to millions of people in our country.

What are these other things that people need? They need time to rest and time to think and feel. They need a chance to read books, listen to music, see beautiful things, and to exchange their thoughts with other people. They need to laugh and cry, or just to be quietly by themselves, wondering about life and death. Without all this, they cannot grow the way they were meant to grow; they remain like the tree or the plant we have just talked about.

The sort of things people need to grow fully cannot happen by themselves. People must first have spare time, or leisure; they must be healthy, they must be educated, and they must have some extra money to spend on things like books and music.

You do know, don't you, that one cannot have anything without paying for it? Food and clothes cost money, but so does spare time and everything else that people need. In fact the things that have nothing to do with the needs of the body are often the most expensive. When you are a little older you will understand how. And these things have to be provided too, along with what people need to stay alive, before we can say that they are really being looked after. Millions of our people still do not have enough to eat. And because first things must come first, think of the long,



long way we still have to go, step by step, before each Indian can grow and live like a full human being, in freedom and with responsibility.

Gandhi once said that to a poor man God can only come in the form of bread. This is a way of saying that a hungry man cannot be expected to think of other things until he has eaten. But after food, clothing, and a house, there is still a long list of human needs — schools for children, hospitals for the sick, something to ride in, roads to travel on, ways of getting the news, and many other things. We are still at the first stage, of trying to see that no one in this country goes hungry. The other things have to come later. And because we believe everybody in this country should have equal chances, each of our 846 million people has to be thought of.

Many foreign visitors to India see beggars in the bazaars and people in rags sitting on the side of the road doing nothing. “Why don’t you make these people work?” they ask. “Why doesn’t the Government find proper jobs for them or give them money?” Perhaps these thoughts have also come to you. What is the answer?

However much the Government may want to give everyone everything he needs, and however hard it may try, it can only distribute what it has, not what it does not yet have. The amount of money a country can distribute and the number of jobs it can give are both limited. Both depend on how developed a country is; or, in other words, on how much the country has been able to do already for its people. A poor country like ours that has just



started to develop cannot hope to give each person whatever he needs immediately.

But some people have more than others, you will argue. Why not take away something from those who have much more than others and distribute it again more fairly, so that everybody has more or less the same? Well, we are trying to do that in certain ways but that by itself will not solve the problem. It would be like trying to distribute a cup of water equally to a thousand thirsty people. The fact is that the number of people who are very rich is much, much smaller than the number of those who have almost nothing. So, even if the wealth of all the rich people in the country were to be collected and given to the poor, India would still remain poor. By the time this wealth was equally distributed amongst all Indians, it would be so little that it would make no difference. Remember that however big the hoards of the rich may be, you would have to divide all you can collect by 846,300,000 to know how much each Indian would get! No, this way would not solve anything.

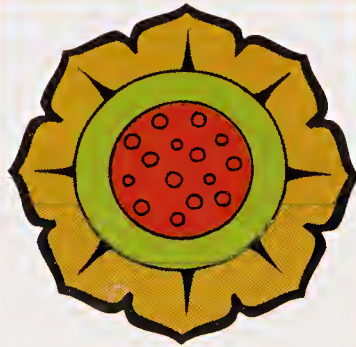
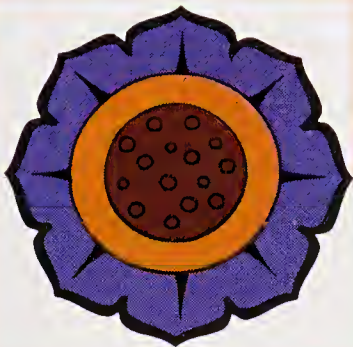
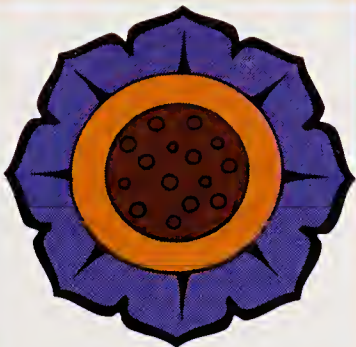
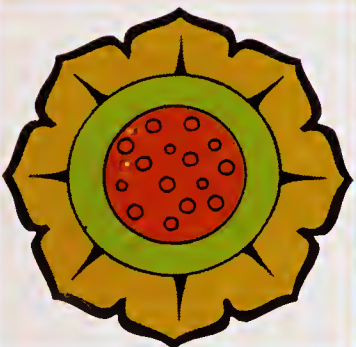
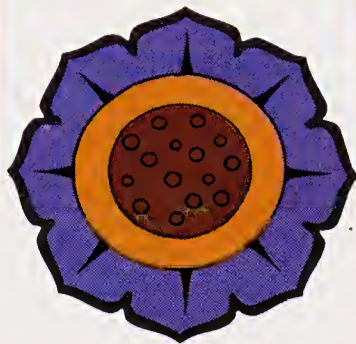
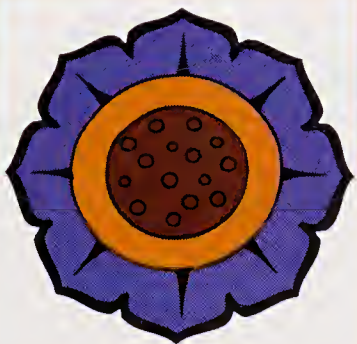
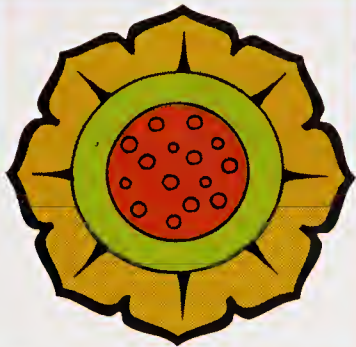
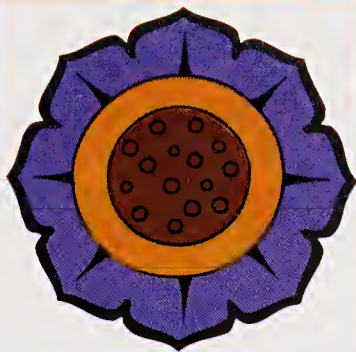
Is there anything that will? Luckily, there is a solution provided each one of us tries hard. You and I and all of us must do whatever we can to help our country to produce more of everything. We must also use up less of what is produced than we did before. In this way, the country's stores can become bigger. These stores, or surpluses as they are called, can then be distributed among more people. This is the only way in which the very poor people can get more than they have now. So you see, our solution really has two parts to it. the first part is to make the size of our national cake, or *laddoo* if you like, bigger so that there is more of it to go round. The second part is to see



that it is shared in a more fair manner than before. Both are equally important. If we fail in either, the Indian people will remain hungry.



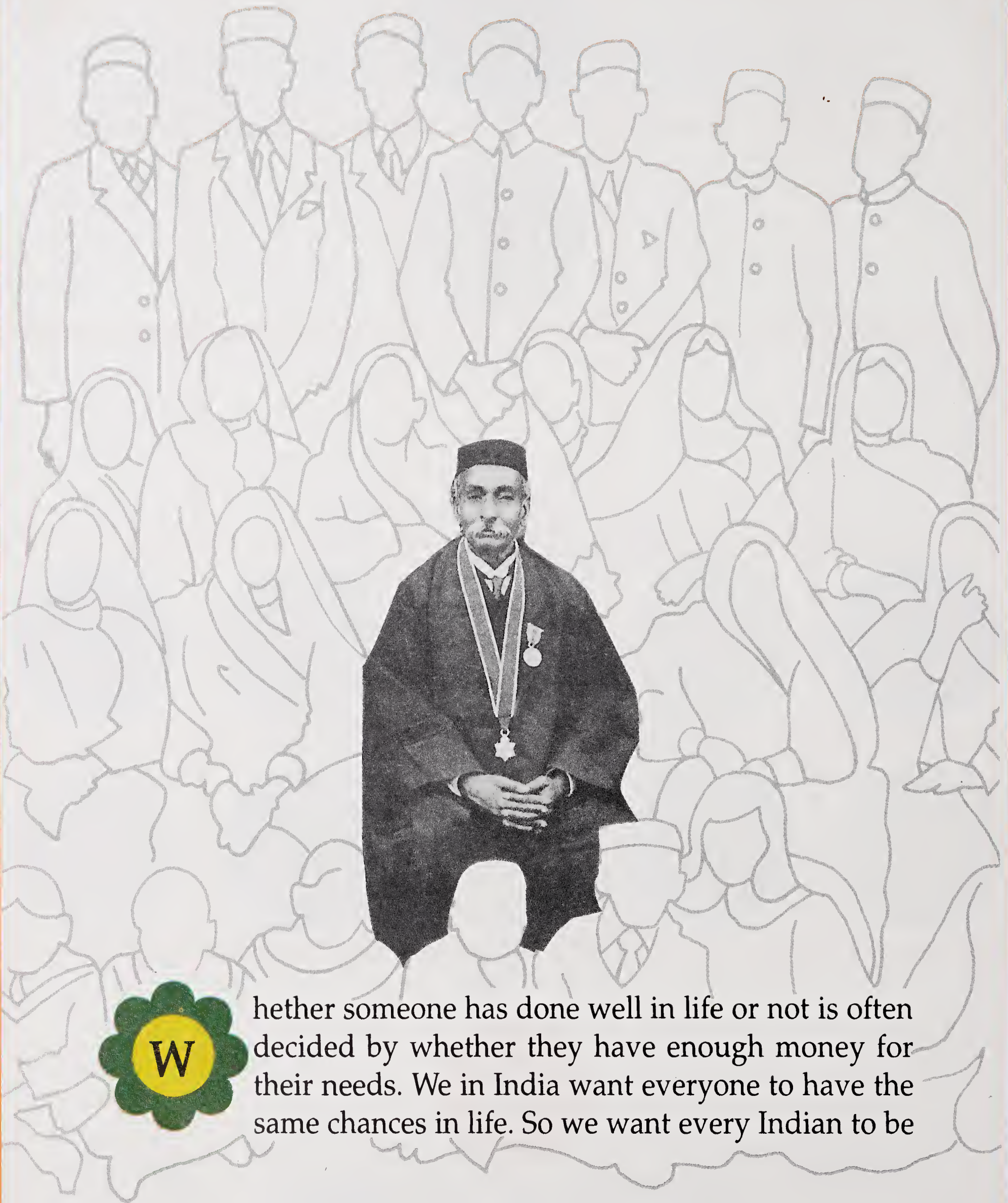




12

THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY





Whether someone has done well in life or not is often decided by whether they have enough money for their needs. We in India want everyone to have the same chances in life. So we want every Indian to be



as rich as anyone else in the country, not more, not less.

Whatever you see in the market is there because people have shown that they want it. They express themselves through their willingness to pay for it with money. In the same way, people with money need houses and hospitals and schools for their children. So these houses and hospitals and schools are built, because there is a demand for them and money to pay for them. Parents who are poor also need schools for their children but because they cannot pay for them, there is no money demand for them. They also need houses to live in and hospitals to take care of them when they are sick. But these houses and hospitals do not come up on their own because the need of the people is not backed up by money.

In some countries the Government tries to take charge of everything. It decides what is to be produced and sold, for how much, and to whom. Certain other countries leave almost everything to money demand. If more people want cinema houses than books, the Government lets the cinema houses come up even though books might be better for the people. We have chosen a way which uses a bit of both because this is what suits us best.

A river can be left completely free to follow its own course. It can also be completely harnessed and controlled and made to flow in a particular way; or it can be allowed to run freely where it does not do any harm; but curbed and dammed up only in those places where it causes damage or floods. This last way is the way we run our affairs.

The Government has to take certain matters in its own hands, in order to deliberately change the way they would shape if left

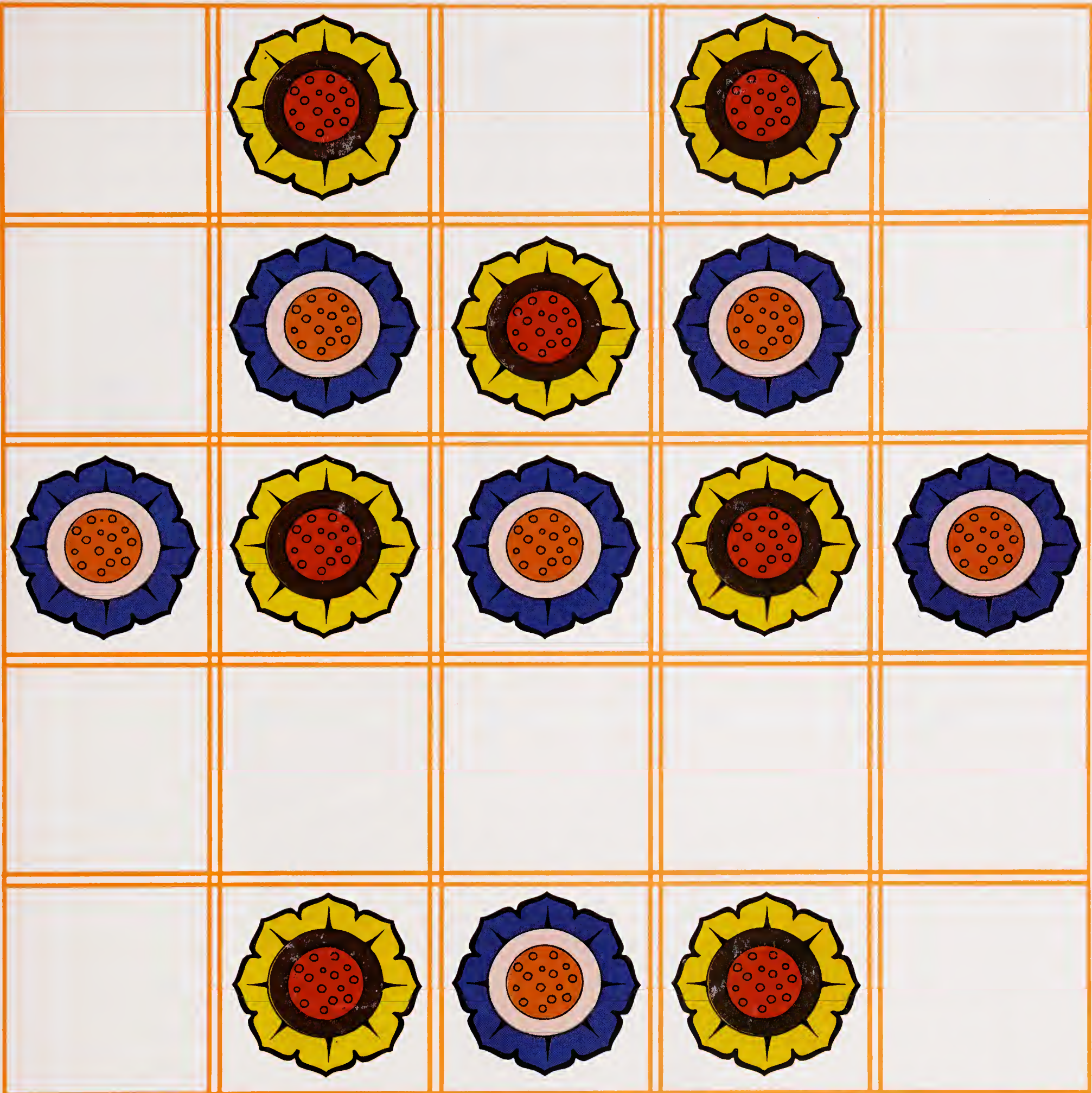


to themselves. Imagine a coal-mining town like Dhanbad where thousands of poor labourers live in terrible hovels. A rich person in that town will make more money if he builds a cinema house in the town instead of proper houses for the miners. This is where the Government steps in and takes charge. It places an order for houses for the miners and perhaps for schools and hospitals, and says "No" to the cinema house if there is a choice between the two. If, on the other hand, rich people on their own start building or producing or selling things that the people of Dhanbad actually need, the Government lets them go ahead. Then it can use its own resources on something else that is badly needed, something for which the people are not in a position to pay.

This method of working makes it possible for the Government to decide on behalf of the people which things are more important than others and which have therefore to be done first, or given *priority*. The actual doing of these things, of course, depends a lot on help from the people for whom they are meant.

Where people want the right things, the Government leaves them alone. Where they are too weak to demand the things they really need, the Government does the demanding for them, on their behalf, just like a good head of the family does. This is the way India is planning for the future.





13

TIME-TABLE FOR FIVE YEARS





hen you have to study for your examination, you have many things to do. You have to read a number of books, to look at the work you have done earlier



and perhaps to learn tables or formulas. If you have two months to do it in, and you want to be quite sure that no subject is left out, the best way is to make a time-table for yourself. This time-table tells you what you have to do each day and for how many hours. What you are really doing is breaking up two months' work into smaller bits of daily work because this way it is easier to keep a check on yourself. The final aim, of course, is to pass the examination that is two months away.

If you go on working according to a daily time-table for a long time, you will find that at the end of each year you know much more than you did at the beginning. Can you remember the time when you could do only simple additions? Or when you first learnt the rule of three? Now you can solve much more complicated problems and have even started on new subjects like Algebra and Geometry. What has brought you from baby sums like two plus two makes four, to the stage of equations? Nothing but your daily time-table. Through it, you have been adding, a little at a time, to what you know.

India's Five-Year Plans that you have been hearing so much about are like the country's daily time-table. "Why five years?" you might ask. "Why not ten or twenty or thirty or even hundred?" Well, because five years is neither too long nor too short a time for a country in our situation. It is just right. A five-year period for India is like one day in the life of a young person like you. Isn't one day easier to plan for than one month? In the same way, it is easier for India to plan for five years at a time instead of a hundred years.

If India's Five-Year Plans are like the daily time-table, we



could say that the final examination here is the raising of the standard of living of the Indian people. When a Five-Year Plan is completed, we know that we are one step nearer our aim. You might make small changes in your time-table because you find it easier to do arithmetic first, although you have put down geography at the beginning. You might also find that some subjects take up more time than you thought and some less; or that certain portions of a subject are more difficult or more easy than you thought. As you try it out, the time-table changes in small ways in order that it may suit you better. The main purpose of it, however, remains the same.

In the same way, India's Five-Year Plans describe roughly what has to be done within that period. We do not treat this time-table as though it were made of iron because it is meant to make things easier for us, not more difficult. Many of the tasks we are taking up in the Five Year Plans are like new subjects. We do not know how easy or how difficult they are going to be until we actually try them out. We can, of course, be more sure about those things in the next Five-Year Plan, but in the next Plan there will be other "subjects" which would again be new to us. So in a sense we shall have to go on experimenting and tailoring our Plans to suit us as we go along. This is another very special thing about Indian Planning.

Just as an individual worker earns money, a country also has earnings. This is called the national income, which is the total amount that the country makes from its farms, factories, and what we call its services. This is what the total number of Indians have to share. If each person has to have more, the country has to increase its national income and then try to distribute it more



evenly. But what had been happening in the last twenty-five years, and even before, was this. We managed to increase the earnings of the country a little, but the total number of Indians grew so fast that the share of each remained almost the same.

If four of you have to share a banana, each gets only one fourth, and this is not enough. So you try to get yourselves another banana, with great difficulty. But by this time four more friends





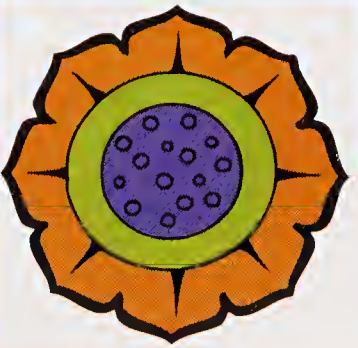
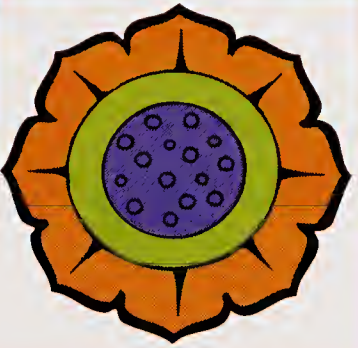
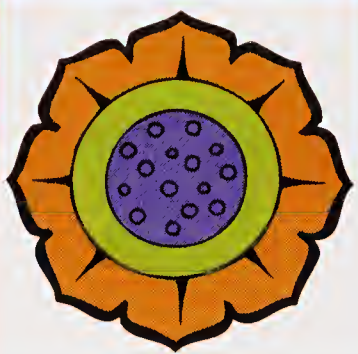
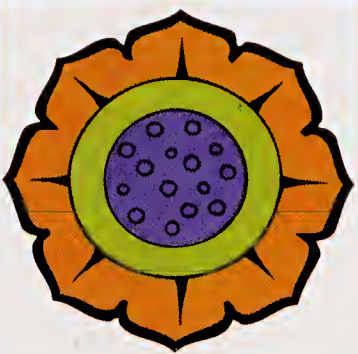
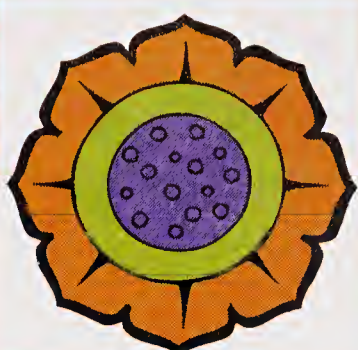
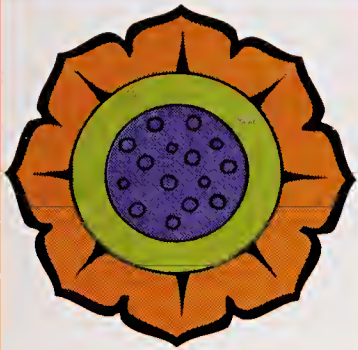
have joined you. Each still gets one-fourth. So, two bananas are still not enough; even though what you have is twice as much as what you had earlier. If instead of eight people to share two bananas, there were ten, each would get even less than one-fourth. Something of this kind has been happening in India. What we needed to do was to have *more* bananas and *less* people. Only then could it make a real difference.

We have called the wealth of each Indian his share of the banana. What would happen when the Indian had eaten his share? Would he not be exactly where he was before? But we wanted him to be able to eat bananas all the time if he wanted to. That might have made a difference to his life. The only way to do this was to make arrangements to produce more and more bananas. As you know, arrangements also cost money, sometimes more money than the thing itself. This money could only come from savings. There would never be any improvement if we just ate up everything we had.

So we had three important things to do in our Plans. The first was to *produce more*; the second was to *eat up less* of it and *save* as much as we could; and the third was to see that the total *number of Indians did not grow as fast* as before.



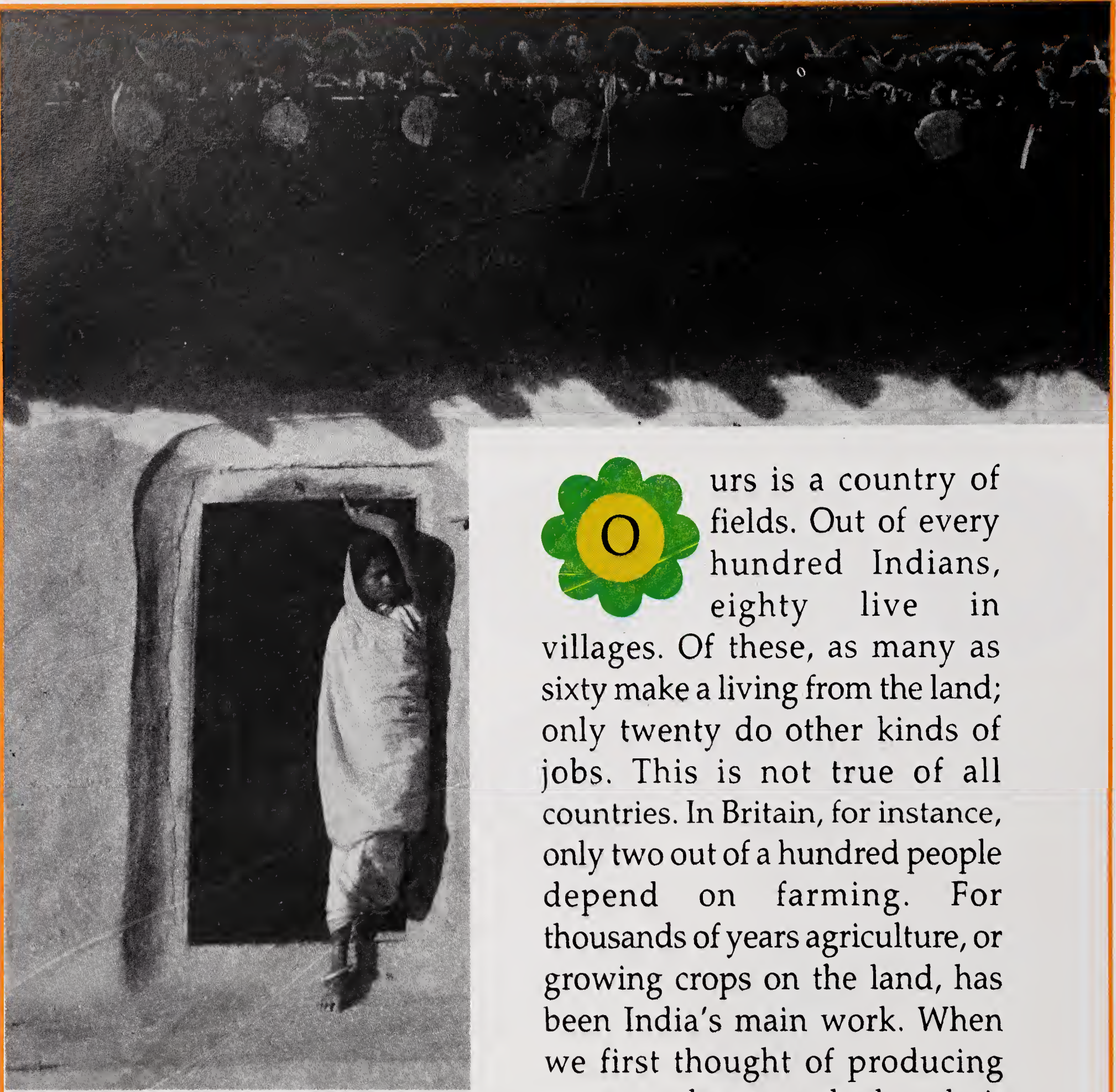




14

LIVING ON THE LAND



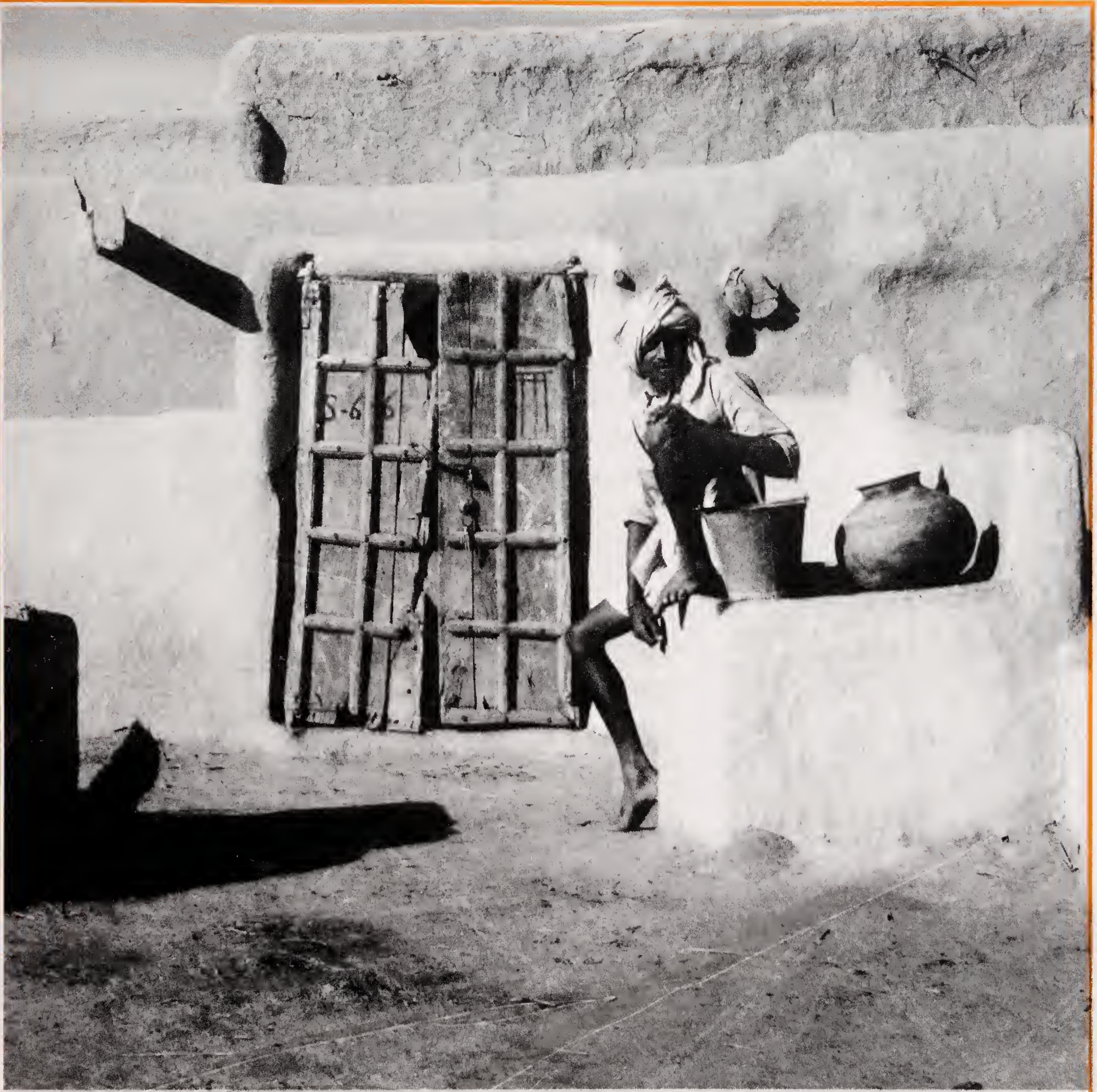


Our is a country of fields. Out of every hundred Indians, eighty live in villages. Of these, as many as sixty make a living from the land; only twenty do other kinds of jobs. This is not true of all countries. In Britain, for instance, only two out of a hundred people depend on farming. For thousands of years agriculture, or growing crops on the land, has been India's main work. When we first thought of producing more, we knew we had to do it

through farming, not in any other way. Most of the money we spent on our first Five-Year Plan was spent on improving our agriculture, because we wanted each acre of land and each person who worked on the land to produce more than before.

When India became independent in 1947, there were about





350 million people living here. Today there are about 846 million. This means we have been adding about 10 million people every year. Just think of it! The total population of a country of the size of Sweden is less than that. We have been adding at least one Sweden to ourselves every year! And the huge population of our

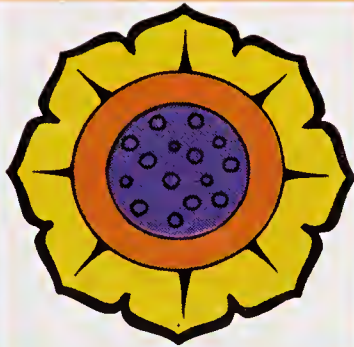


country continues to get bigger at a faster and faster rate. So, we have more and more and more people to feed and take care of, while the land we have to grow food on remains the same. To stay alive, we simply had to get more out of our fields. That is why agriculture was the first priority in our first Plan.

The first thing land needs is water — the right amount, at the right time. The eyes of the Indian farmer were always anxiously fixed on the sky, because he depended only on the rains. If the monsoons failed, or were late, all his hard work was wasted and he had to starve as well. If there was too much rain, the rivers became like wild animals and washed away his crops. Sometimes his home and his cattle and whatever little else he owned was also destroyed by the floods. Vast tracts of land became useless for growing crops because they were far from rivers and did not get enough rain. India could no longer afford to leave everything to Nature.

One great task of our first Five-Year Plan was to tame our rivers, so that the water could be stored and used when it was needed. India started some giant river valley projects in the first Five-Year Plan. Each of these projects costs between 100 and 200 crore rupees. We also took up some less costly jobs like digging wells and tanks which would also bring water to the fields. But this was a very small beginning and solved the problem of only a few farmers.





15

AGRICULTURE MEANS A HUNDRED THINGS





Water is not the only thing a farmer needs to grow a better crop. You would be amazed at the number of things which can help to grow more on the land. Fertilizer to make the soil richer, and pesticides to control and kill ants and insects that eat up the crops, for instance. Fertilizers and pesticides can be produced only by people who understand the chemistry of these things. To train such people we must have technical colleges and laboratories. And who are the people who can really learn in these technical colleges and laboratories? Those who have first been to school. Those who





actually use the fertilizer or pesticide have to learn just how to do it. Even if growing more food was our only aim, we could not achieve it without making arrangements for more education in the country.

This is also true of providing water for the fields. Who can design dams and build canals? Who can tell us where wells should be dug and in what way? Only engineers who understand all about such things. So we are back to schools and colleges again.

We also need to have more knowledge about soil, seeds and crops if we want to get more from the land. This knowledge again comes from colleges, laboratories and experiments in the field. Only trained people can be of use in this.

The cement and bricks we need to build dams and wells, and the fertilizer we need to make the soil richer, have to come from factories. In trying to give the farmer the very first things he needs, we cannot do without schools and factories.

There are lots of other things we need. How can we get water from a deep well up to the surface? A bucket and rope, or the water-wheel, will not get us very far. They involve too much time and work and the amount of water one can get in this way is hardly enough for what we want to achieve. But if we use electric motors to pump the water up, much more can be done. To get electricity for our use is in itself an enormously complicated and difficult business. We need huge turbines, transmission lines, and other equipment. Again we need factories to produce the equipment, and engineers to show us how to use it. Better farm implements, tractors and other farming machines cannot be



produced without factories either.

Even to make a more efficient plough for the farmer we need steel. To make steel, we need iron and coal. For this we have to make the mining operations in India bigger and better. For all this we need electricity. So you see, even when you are trying to improve just one thing, agriculture, you have to develop a hundred other things as well. In fact, in a country like ours things are so linked up that we could almost say something as odd as: "Only development can help us to develop".

Now let us go a little further with this thought. Most Indian farmers who work on the land have not had a chance to go to school and cannot read and write. How can they be told to use better seeds, to use fertilizer, to try a particular method of growing crops, to change to better farming tools? Of course, village workers can go from house to house explaining everything to everyone, but would it not be much easier if this was done through the radio? To make radio receiving sets and transistors, we need experts in electronics, factories to produce the various parts that are needed, and a whole army of trained people who can tell the people on the radio how they could do better than they were doing.

A tired or sick person cannot work as hard or as well as a normal person. Nor can he feel as happy. Ten healthy workers can do much more than fifty sick people. Better health was also something we needed for our people, for two reasons. First for its own sake, because India wanted her people to be less unhappy; and secondly because there was a lot of hard work to be done, and only healthy people could do it.



When at last the farmer succeeds in producing more than he was doing earlier, he must be able to sell it. There must be roads to carry his produce into towns where there is a market for them. There must be trucks to carry it on the roads, and if it has to travel a long distance there must be railways. In fact we need two-way communications. The new knowledge or know-how must first come to the farmer along with better seeds, fertilizer and tools; and when the village begins to produce more than it needs, there must be a way of sending it where it is needed and can be sold. Otherwise, it would just lie in the fields and get spoilt. Without roads and railways, producing more from the land would be of very little use to anyone.

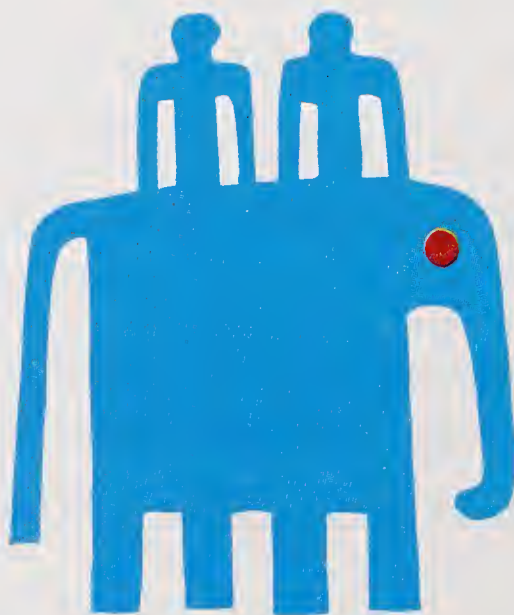
The farmer who is able to produce more than he needs becomes a little richer than he was, because he can sell what is left after his own family's needs have been met. The more he produces, the richer he becomes. But what is the use of being richer unless he can have more comforts than he had before? To give the average man a better life is the main purpose of everything India has done since independence. With the increase in his earnings the farmer wants to buy many things — clothes, shoes, battery torches, transistors, radios, bicycles, lanterns, furniture, toys, medicines, sweets, tea, buckets, lamps, and so many other things that can make his life easier and pleasanter. As more and more people begin to want such things and also begin to earn enough money to buy them, India must make arrangements to produce them. Otherwise what use would it be to the people to make such an effort to grow more? To provide these things, we again need big industries. No industry can be started without money to pay for the machines, the building and



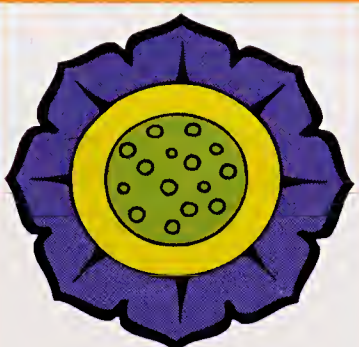
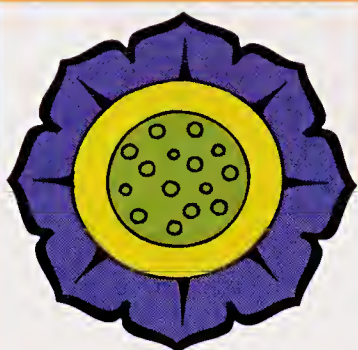
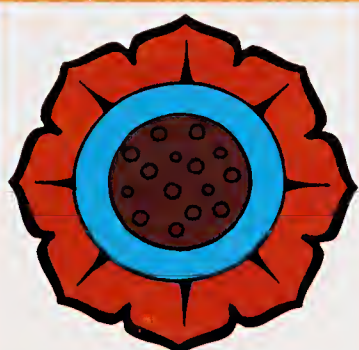
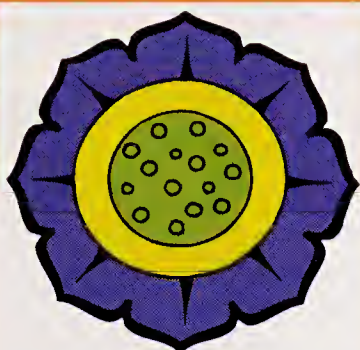
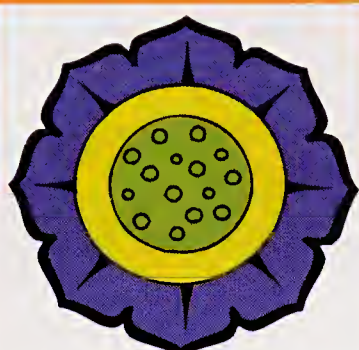
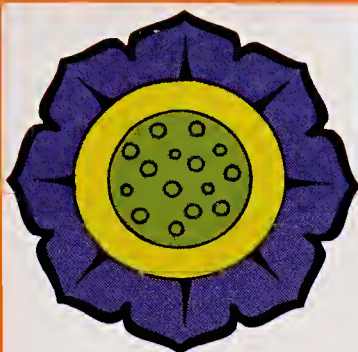
the raw materials. And this money could only come from savings. So it was absolutely necessary for us not to use up everything we earned.

Do you see how a simple thing like trying to improve agriculture starts off a long chain of other needs — electricity, machines, iron and steel, fuel, schools, colleges, laboratories, hospitals, roads, railways, factories and mills, and many, many others?

Doesn't this remind you of the way your bodies grow? If you want your legs to be longer, the rest of you must also grow at the same time. The whole person must grow, and then each part will grow by itself. In the case of India all growth had stopped for a long, long time. That is why we had to make a very special effort to start the process somewhere once again.



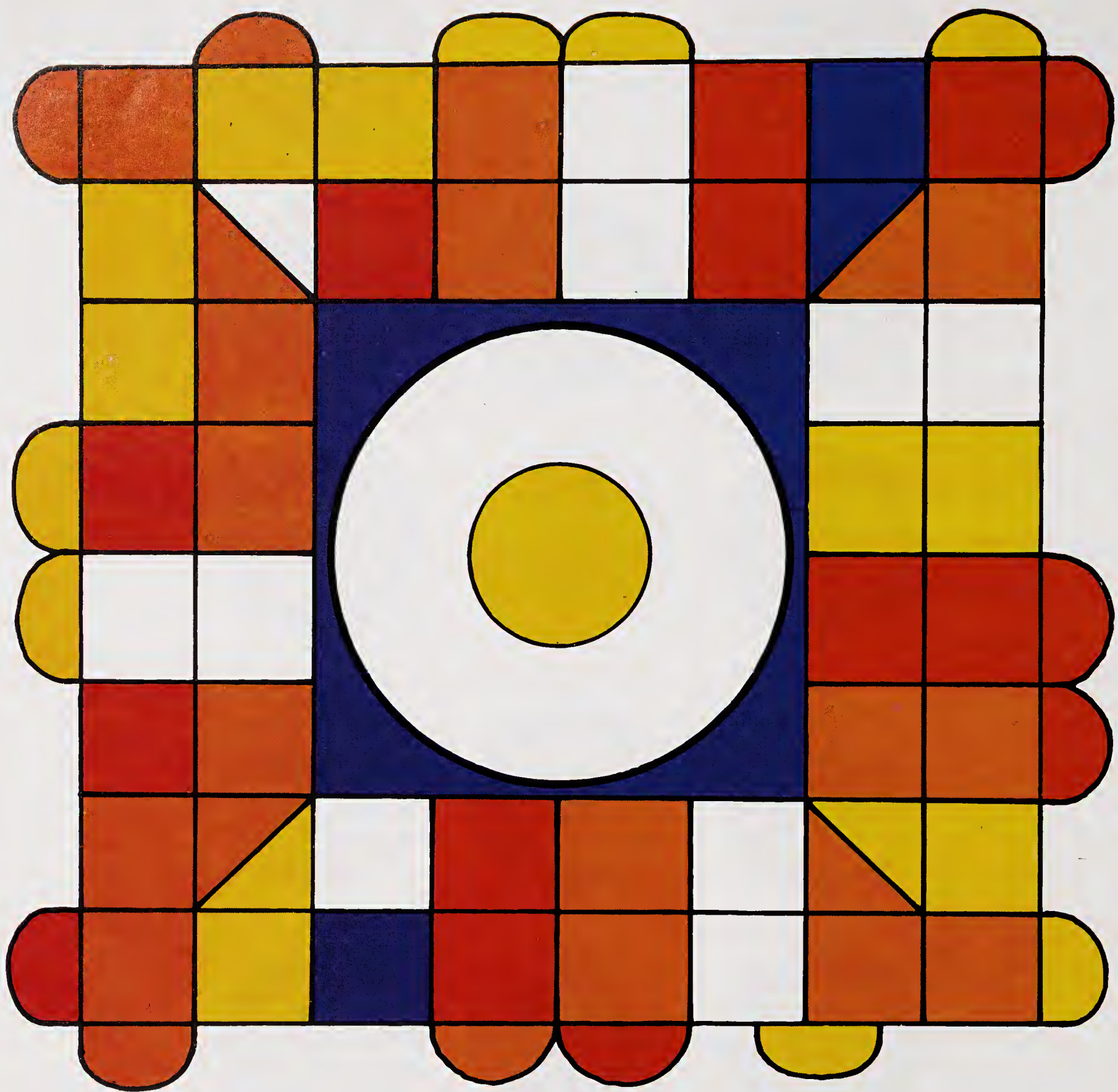




16

THE BATTLE PLAN





ou know now that we could not develop even farming without dams, electricity, factories, mining, transport, health and education. But we had very little money to spend and could not possibly do everything we wanted all at once. We had put aside Rs 2,378 crores for the first Plan. It sounds like a lot of money, but it is



even less than what the single State of New York in the USA spends in one year, and on far fewer people than we have in India. But this was all we could afford. We spent about half of it on improving agriculture and divided the rest between industry, mining, transport and communications, education and health.

One reason why we could not go very far with our first Plan was that we had to use quite a bit of our time, money and energy in first-aid work. We had to attend to a serious injury. It was the economy of our country that had been hurt. A few years before we became free, the British forced India to take part in the Second World War, although this war had nothing to do with India, and was not fought on our land. The British squeezed as much as they could out of our country to help them with the very expensive business of war.

Everything we had was thrown into the war without a thought of how this would affect the Indian people. Even the bare necessities were taken away from them and suddenly they had nothing. There was a terrible famine in Bengal. Three million people died like flies, and there was an acute shortage of food everywhere.

The country had still not recovered from this strain when a big chunk of it was cut off to form Pakistan in 1947. You already know the story of partition. Some of our most fertile lands were taken away. We were left with cotton and jute mills, while the cotton and jute fields went to Pakistan. This affected the livelihood of millions of people. To add to this, eight million refugees from Pakistan came to India and had to be looked after, as you already know. These wounds had first to heal before we could start





walking again. So, one of our tasks in the first Five Year Plan, which started in 1951, was to bring things back to normal.

It was only with the second Plan that we really got to grips with the problem. At this time, there was a great debate on planning in our country, the biggest there has ever been on the subject. Indian experts thought carefully for a long time to decide which was the best way for us to follow. We also asked economists and technical men from all over the world who understood India's special needs for their advice. About our aim, we were quite clear. What we wanted most of all was not to have to depend on anybody but ourselves, specially for things that were important.





Self-reliance, then, was what we wanted. But if we did not like to depend on help from other countries, we would have to produce whatever we needed in our own country, including the machines that make other things. But if you think of the fact that India did not even make simple everyday articles like bicycle tyres, stoves and gas lamps at the time when we became free, you will realize what a tall order we gave ourselves.

It is very hard work to haul water up from a deep well, but once you have got the water up on the land, it spreads everywhere by itself. This was the way we chose to develop our country; so that growth would go on by itself, after the first big push. But this first push, of course, had to be a very powerful one.

Because we were a poor country and had so little, it was important that we should spend only on things which would make our *economy* grow by itself, not our comforts. Suppose we had only thought of producing more food and more cloth and other things that people use in their daily lives, we would just have eaten up or used up the extra things which we produced. Then we would once again have been exactly where we were before. We would have had to make the same effort again and again.

Instead of this, we thought the wisest, most farsighted way would be to invest our money in machines that make other machines, and in steel, electricity, cement, fertilizer and other such things. This is all heavy industry. It costs a great deal and takes a long time to show results. And when the results do appear, they are in the shape of machines or other goods that people cannot use immediately. Take fertilizer, for instance. You cannot



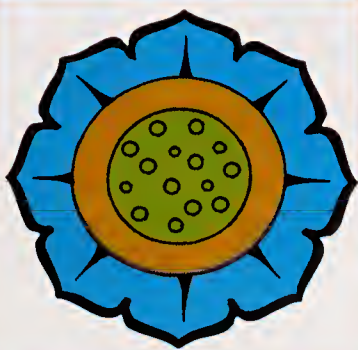
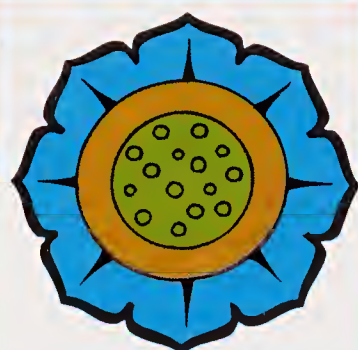
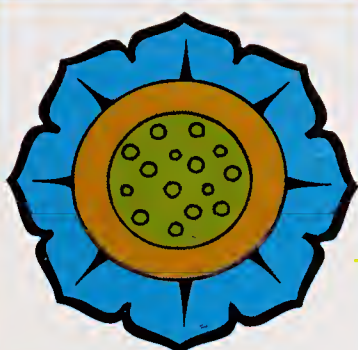
get the benefit of it straightway. You have to wait for another stretch of time before it can result in a richer crop, and in better and more plentiful food. That is to say, the advantage of this type of industry takes a long time to reach the people whose lives it is finally meant to make more comfortable. But it makes the waiting worthwhile because one is sure that once such an industry is established, wealth will continue to flow from it.

We could not afford to set up such costly industries at random — as many as we liked, and wherever we liked. We had to think very carefully which heavy industries we should begin with and decide where it would be most useful to locate them. In battle, too, an army general posts his troops in strategic positions according to a careful battle plan. This is because the number of soldiers he has is limited and he has to make the best possible use of them. We had to do very much the same thing. That is why you often hear the phrase “the strategy of the Plan”.

Even though we were busy with heavy industry, we could not slow down our work for improving agriculture. People can wait for something like a better house or a better job, but they cannot wait for food. It is an immediate necessity and therefore, no matter how hard we had to work for developing industry, we could not afford to neglect agriculture.







17

"TO WIPE EVERY TEAR FROM EVERY EYE"





ost of the money for the Plans came from what the nation had been able to save. Some came from what the Government could borrow from the public, and





some from loans from other countries. In a few matters, we boldly went ahead without actually having the money, in the hope that when the project for which it was needed was completed, the project would pay for itself. A big chunk of the money came from taxes which richer people had to pay. Many projects and industries were set up in the poorer and more backward parts of the country, so that the people of those areas gained more from them than others. The new taxes and the decisions about where projects were to be started helped us in another way, too. They lessened the differences between the rich and the poor and brought us nearer to our dream of making all Indians equal. This briefly was the strategy of Indian planning.

The third Plan was much bigger. The Government planned to spend Rs 11,600 crores, which is Rs 300 crores more than the amount spent on the first and the second Plans together. We continued with the same strategy. But during this Plan, we ran into some serious difficulties. In the first year of the third Plan, India was attacked by China, and three years later by Pakistan. In the last year of this Plan and in the following year the rains failed and we had very poor harvests. It took all our attention and effort to get over these problems, and the result was that many things we had planned to do remained undone.

In the two dry years between 1965 and 1966, we nearly had a famine in Bihar. If this had happened twenty-five years earlier, millions of people would have died of starvation. This time roads and railways came to the rescue. We could use these because now the Government was on the side of the people. We were able to carry food from other parts of the country to the areas where there was scarcity. But much of this food had to come from abroad.



We, a country of fields and farmers, had to buy food from other countries!

This worried us. We realized that we still depended too much on others. A new effort to produce more food started with a bang. Our arrangements to supply water for our fields, rain or no rain, would still take time to reach every corner of the country. But there were other, easier, quicker, less costly things we would do. We could find other ways of making the land grow more, and this is what we did. Our agricultural scientists worked day and night to produce seeds that would grow much faster or yield much more than they did before, or do both. The same field could then be used more times during the year than before. They worked out how a farmer could change from one crop to another, or rotate his crops, so that the soil did not get tired and used up. Many kinds of experiments were tried out, and they were extremely successful. In fact, India's success in this field was so striking that people throughout the world talk about it and call it a big breakthrough. Some people call it the green revolution. Now the produce from the same fields is more than double what it used to be when we started on our Plans.

The big spurt we put on to produce more food was very valuable, but the special work we did was not a regular part of our Plans. Many things which were part of the third Plan could not be finished in time. So we decided to first finish whatever had been left undone before moving on to the fourth Plan. This took three years. For each of these years, we managed with an annual plan, which lasted only for that year.

We took the fourth Plan off the shelf only in 1969. We are now in the end of the eighth. For this Plan, the Government





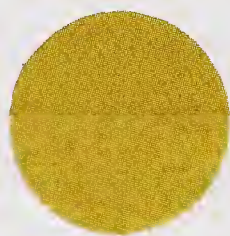
will spend Rs. 7,98,000 crore. In addition to what the Government, or the public sector, spends on our Plans, a large number of private organizations on their own also spend money on development, because it is their business. If a millowner increases production in his establishment, he can earn more profit, but at the same time whatever his mill produces gets added to what the country as a whole has. To that extent, his business makes the country richer. We call all such activity the private sector, and do not stop it from doing whatever it pleases so long as it helps the country in the way we want.

Figures do not always make sense, but if you were to look at how much the Government has been spending, you will get some idea of how much bigger each Plan is than the last.

The amount that was spent by the Government in the fourth Plan was more than six times what it was in the first and the figure has been increasing more and more with each Plan.



After the fourth Plan, there was a fifth, a sixth, a seventh and an eighth Five-Year Plan. No one knows yet how many there will be before our task is done.



First Plan  
(1951-56)

Rs 1,960 crores



Second Plan  
(1956-61)

Rs 4,600 crores



Third Plan Rs 8,576 crores  
(1961-66)





Fourth Plan Rs 15,902 crores  
(1969-74)

You already know what this task is. Those who fought for the freedom of India and gave their whole lives to this cause felt very deeply for the people of this land, and dreamed of building a new India. This seemed to them a great and exciting adventure. When our freedom was won, Jawaharlal Nehru did not ask the people to dance and sing for joy just because we at last had our heart's desire. Instead, he said : "The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty



and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of Gandhi, the greatest man of our generation, has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

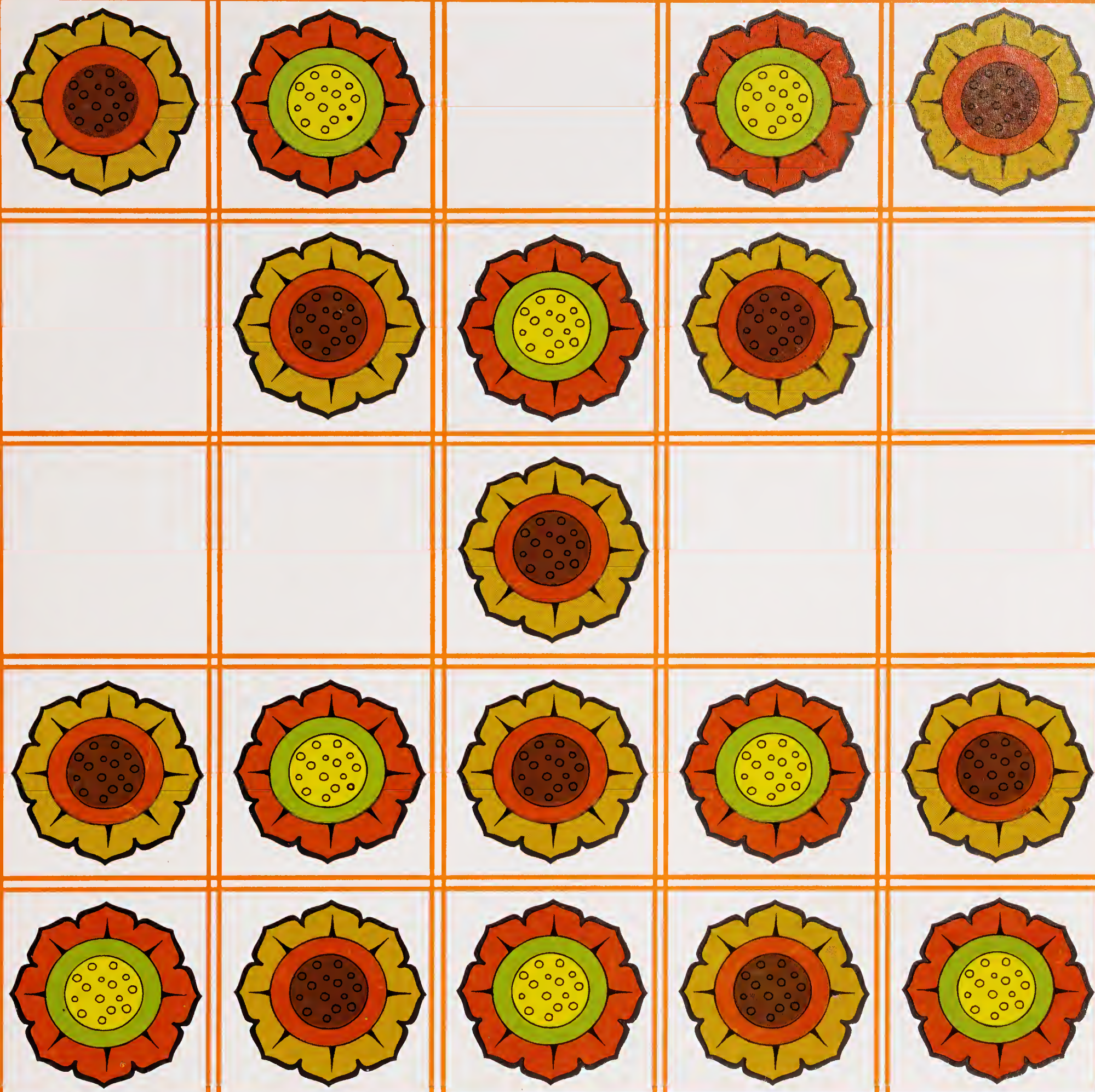
“And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams.....” Jawaharlal Nehru said.

To him, and to a whole generation of people, the purpose of freedom was “to bring freedom and opportunity to the common man, to the peasants and workers of India; to fight and end poverty and ignorance and disease; to build up a prosperous, democratic and progressive nation, and to create social, economic and political institutions which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman.”

For many, many years we shall be busy doing this.







18

THEN AND NOW





as India advanced as a result of all the planning you have been reading about? Well, of course she has, but if you want to know how much, you have to compare the results of the work that has been done in this country with the way things were before this work started.

You need to have a 'then' in your mind, and a 'now'. 'Then' is the time when India started on her first Five-Year Plan; 'now', of course, is today, some forty-five years later. 'Now' will also turn into 'then', and there will have to be a new 'now' in your mind. This process will go on for yet a long time in our country,





because we still have a long way to go before we arrive where we want to. But you will see that we have certainly been moving.

Today India's income is twenty times as much as it was before the Plans started. Her fields produce thrice as much, and



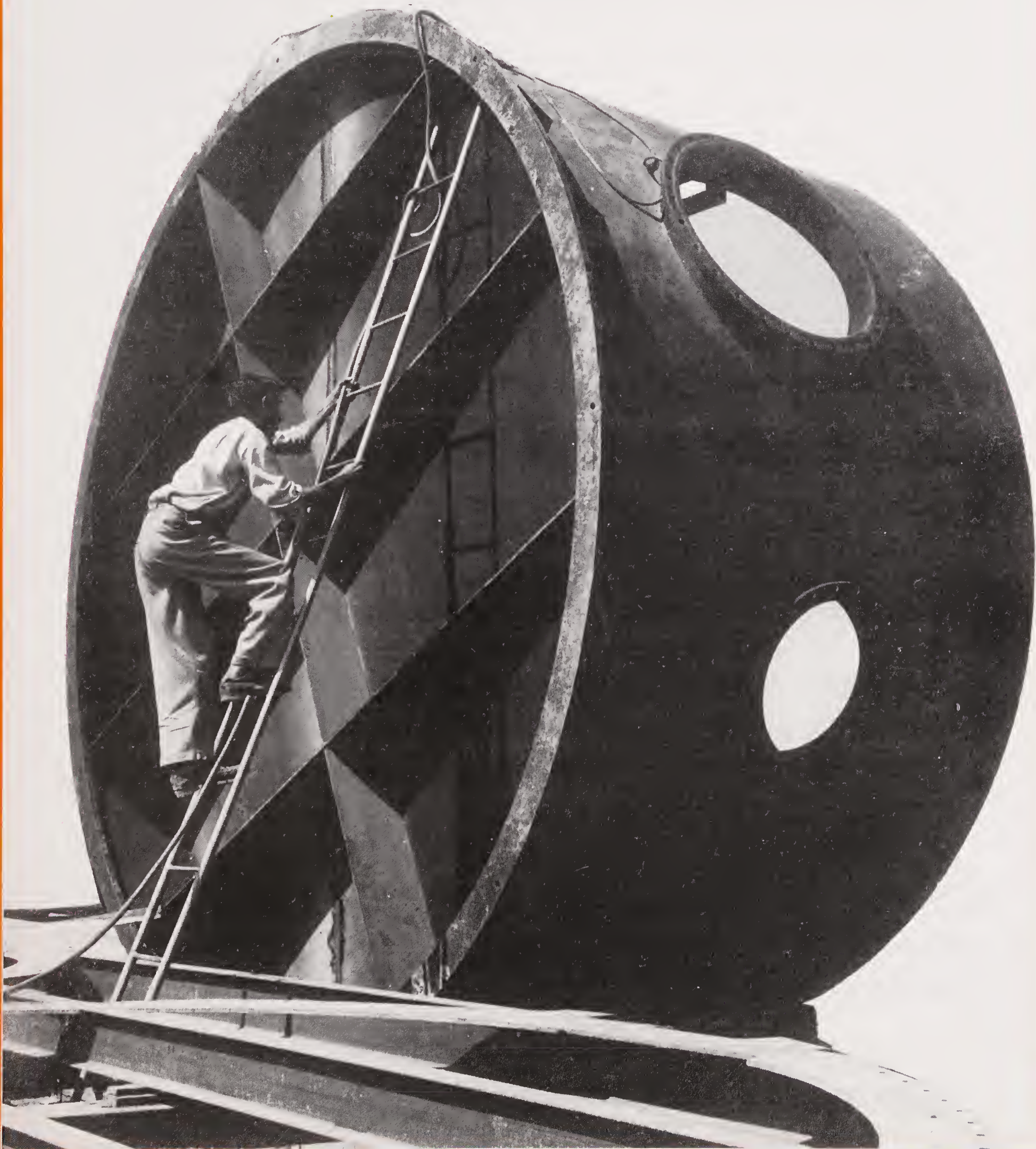
her factories over fourteen times as much. Nearly thrice as many people can read and write. We have four times as many schools, twelve times as many colleges, eight times as many school-children and twenty-two times as many university students. More and more people in India know what is going on here and in the world; there are now three times as many newspapers and journals and nearly twenty times as many radio sets. The postal service is much better too, and we now have nearly six times as many post offices as before. There are five times as many hospitals. The medical services have improved so much that an Indian can now hope to live twenty to twenty-five years longer.

Now thrice as many people travel in trains. The mileage of roads has increased five times. Indian ships have twelve times as much work to do; fifteen times as many people now travel by air in the country. There are 83 times as many motor vehicles on our roads.

You know that only sixty years ago, we had hardly any industry. Even simple things like soap, biscuits and ink used to be imported from other countries. Many of the calendars in Indian homes were printed in Germany. The British had laid railway lines in India, but every single bit that was needed to run trains had to come from England — engine, coaches, fishplates and everything else, except for the wooden sleepers. There were some cloth mills in the country, but the spindles and looms came from England. Some papers and books were printed here, but the presses had to be imported. Nothing that a country needs for its defence could be made in India. We did make shoes, saddles for horses, and tents, but even for the tents, the canvas came from abroad.



Today India makes even supersonic jet planes. All of you know about the MIG 21, the Gnat, the Avro transport plane and the HF 24. These are all made here in India by our own people. Our Arjun tank is one of the most modern tanks in the world.





And of course we make guns and ammunition of all kinds. The *Nilgiri* is a modern frigate we have built for our navy; *Himagiri* is the next, and we have plans for others. Each of these cost about twenty crores of rupees, so you can imagine how difficult and complicated it must be to construct them.

Wherever you may be, you do not have to travel too far to see for yourself the giant leap India has taken from 'then' to 'now'. Things that prove this are everywhere, in every corner of the country; the huge dams at Bhakra, Hirakud and Nagarjunasagar; the steel mills at Bhilai, Rourkela and Durgapur; the fertilizer factories at Sindri and Nangal; the aircraft factories at Bangalore, Nasik and Kanpur; the locomotive factory at Chittaranjan and Varanasi, the Atomic Reactor at Trombay; the rocket launching station at Thumba. We are even trying to make missiles, and to launch satellites. Such things have brought India, or at least some bits of India, to the level of the most advanced nations of the world. What we now have to do is to spread the benefits of the things we have been able to do with the help of modern science and technology evenly, so that they reach every single village.

If we can make turbines, power machines, and electronic computers, you can imagine how much simpler it would be to make fans, radio sets and sewing machines, and, of course, bicycles. Today India is one of the world's largest producers of bicycles!

India is also among the world's largest producers of engineers and doctors. More and more people want to learn, and as the world is making new discoveries in science, medicine and



technology very fast, there is more and more of everything to learn. There are 170 million students in schools and 4.5 million in colleges. Even the farmer whose family has done nothing but grow crops for a thousand years now wants to learn how to use tractors, electric pump-sets, harvesting machines, new kinds of ploughs, seeds, fertilizer, the radio, and the transistor. He also wants to know how he can make use of banks that will lend him money to improve his farm.

In almost every subject, there are many kinds of courses to choose from. For instance, an engineer need not learn only about roads and bridges; he can choose what special type of engineer he should like to be; aeronautical, electrical, industrial, chemical, naval, computer or any other kind.

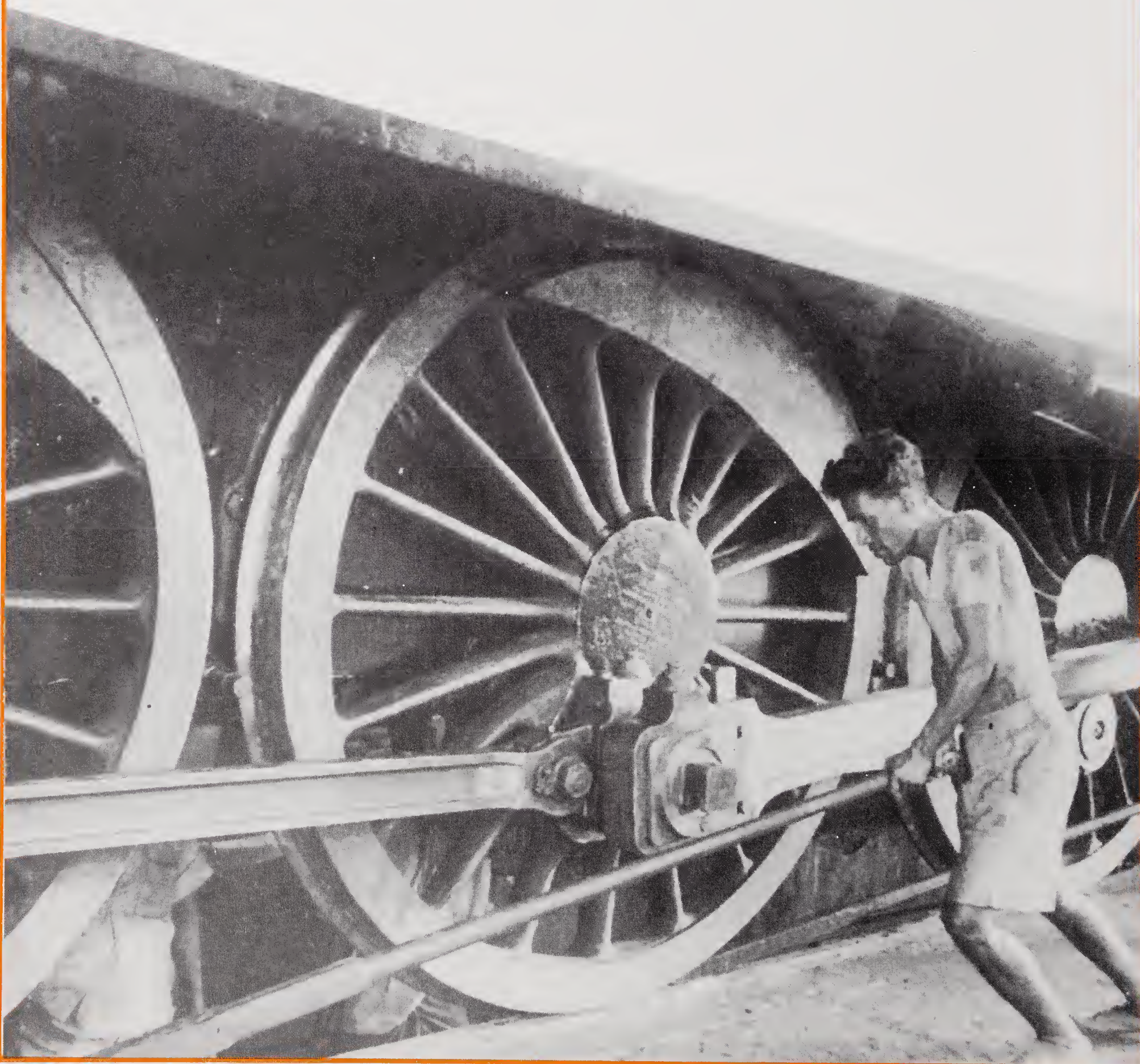
Industry, as it grows, also needs trained people. More and more people in India are therefore moving on from the stage of hunger for the basic needs of life to hunger for education.

Since all the millions of people who live in villages cannot afford to go to colleges to learn ways of improving whatever they are doing, the knowledge they need has been taken to them through a vast network of services under the Community Development Programme which you must have heard of. This knowledge has been backed by more and more supplies of water, fertilizer, seeds and tools. To try and reach each one of India's 500,000 villages in this way has been one of India's biggest and most important tasks.

One of the most exciting things we have been doing between then and now is to carry electric power to the villages on a large scale. Nothing very much can happen in the world of today



without power, either on the farm or in the factory. Did you know that one unit of electricity can do as much work in an hour as a man can do in ten hours? So, electricity is not only something that can brighten homes and streets; it can make each person do more in less time and at less cost. We can tell how rich and strong and modern a country is from the amount of electric power it produces. Today we can generate more than fifty times the electric





power we could in 1947. Every single year we are now increasing our capacity for power generation by as much as in the last fifty years of British rule. When we became free, not even 4,000 of our 500,000 villages had electricity; today more than 490,000 villages have it.

This work takes a lot of money and time. One has first to construct the power projects or stations, then generate electricity from water, coal, diesel oil, or nuclear minerals like thorium or uranium, and then lay transmission lines which will carry it where it is needed. In spite of this the growth of electric power has been unbelievably fast. This in itself is fairly good proof that growth in other things has also been very fast, for general growth and electricity often go hand in hand.

Reading all this it seems as though we have managed to do quite a lot with ourselves and with our country in the last twenty-five years. But let us not forget that this is not enough, nowhere near enough. Many other countries are growing much faster than we are. In fact, the rate at which India is growing is among the slowest in the world. One reason for this, as you already know, is the very fast rate at which our population is increasing. Another reason for this increase is that we have been very successful with our health programmes in these years of planning. People live much longer. They are not killed off in millions by plague, cholera, small-pox and malaria. Much fewer babies die. Diseases can be cured more easily. People eat healthier food, so they do not fall ill as easily as they used to.

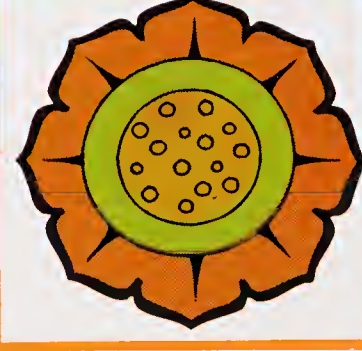
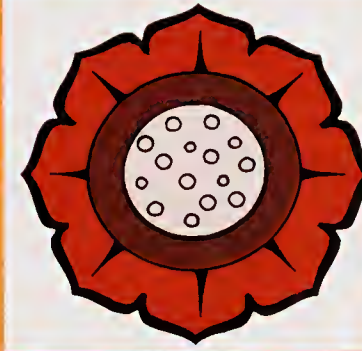
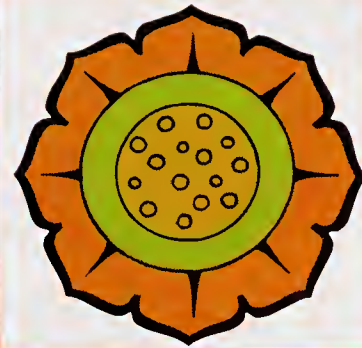
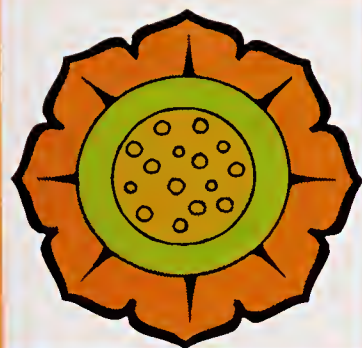
To stop the number of people we have from growing too fast is absolutely necessary for us. Otherwise our struggle to be



free, our hard work through all these years, the enormous amounts of money we have spent on development, the promises to the poor people of India, the long years of waiting for better times, all these would become meaningless.







19

THE VILLAGE THAT STOOD FIRST

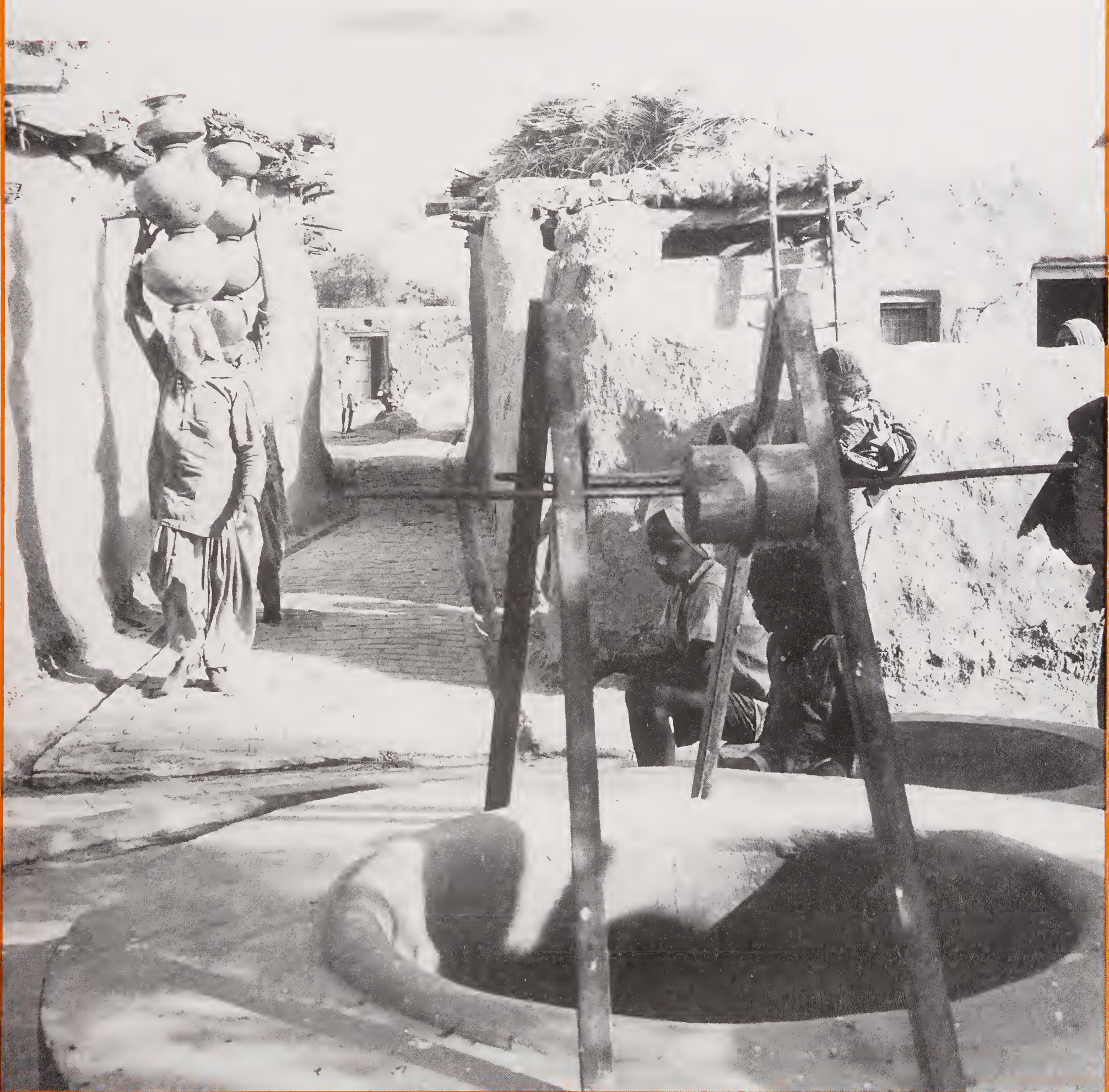




f you really want to know how well a person is, it is not his face, or arms or legs that will tell you. It is his heart, and India's heart is the village. How does the heartbeat of India's 500,000 villages sound?



Of course, all these villages are not in exactly the same condition today. In some the beat is louder than in others; in some it may still be very, very feeble but we can say that they are all beating together, in the same way, because they are a part of the same body, and this body is becoming stronger and stronger.





For hundreds of years most of our villages did not change much. The people who lived there grew the same crops, and ate the same food. The women had never even seen a water tap. They had to carry their pots to the nearest well or stream, which was sometimes many miles away. There were no schools nearby. The few children who went to school had sometimes to walk ten or twelve miles barefoot. Dispensaries and hospitals were even further away. There was no easy way of getting to them even in bullock carts because there were no proper roads. It could easily take eight hours to cover a distance of five miles because often there were jungles and streams in the way and no bridges.

If the rains were good, the crops grew well. If not, the people starved. All they could do was pray. Apart from farming, there used to be only three or four other occupations in the whole village — the potter's, the shoemaker's, and the sweet-seller's. For centuries, nobody had thought of doing something new, something that would bring in more money. Many people had not travelled even twenty miles from their villages, except for the few times they might have gone to the temple, or the cattle fair; to a pilgrimage, or a wedding in another village. They had never seen electric light, a railway train, a radio or a newspaper. Perhaps only one person in the village could read or write. Nothing used to go out of the village, and nothing used to come in. Each village was like a still little pool hidden away behind the bushes, cut off from the rest of country. City people and village people had become so different from each other that people almost forgot that they were all India, and belonged to the same country. Villagers could at once be told apart — from their clothes, their





shoes, their headgear, their ornaments, the way they spoke, and the food they ate.



The Government has spent about a hundred thousand crore rupees on development in the last forty-eight years. You have just read about the great irrigation projects and the advances in agriculture, industry, mining, transport, education, health and so on. Has any of this trickled to the villages yet?

It has to some villages, and it still has not to others. Let us first look at the village that has come first in the race for progress. This village has changed so much that it can hardly be recognized. There are many more kinds of crops and much more of each crop. The farmers are richer. There is a school in the village itself and nearly all the children attend it. College no longer seems a far-off place where the village children can never dream of going. Less women now carry waterpots on their heads, as on picture postcards, because the village now has taps. The electric pump, the drill, the power loom, the jeep and the car have brought to the village sounds that have never been heard before. Tape recorders and television sets too have become household items. Transmission lines against the sky, the new buildings, the irrigation channels, the petrol pumps, and the lighted streets are sights that have not been seen before. The greatest difference is that nobody feels helpless.

People eat better. It is no longer only cereal, and dal and ghee, but also vegetables, and sometimes tea to drink. They also dress better. The shirt worn in this village is not different from a city shirt. People have shoes, wrist watches, new furniture in their homes and transistor sets. They know what nylon is. One sometimes sees parched gram being sold in plastic bags in the village shop. The people use bicycles to go around. There is a bus service everyday to take them long distances. Now and then, they



even watch a film show. If someone in the village falls sick, there is always something that can be done about it, other than praying, or using something from the *masala* box in the kitchen, or calling the holy man to get rid of the evil spirit.

For the first time, there are electricians, motor mechanics, and workshops in this village. Many new kinds of work have sprung up. There is a modern dairy. The milk need no longer be used at once for fear that it will go bad. Thanks to electricity, it can be kept in refrigerators, along with butter and cheese until it is needed. Surplus food, fruits and vegetables of all kinds are bottled or canned and sold. There are hundreds of other new things the people in this village are now doing.

The typical family in this village today looks somewhat different from what it used to. In earlier days, every man in the family, young or old, used to work on the land. A farmer who has four sons, does not expect them all to do the same kind of work. One of the sons is studying in an engineering college hundreds of miles away. One has a job in an office in the city. One is training to be a workshop manager. Only one is looking after the land. When they all meet at home, they find that the world they knew has now stretched and expanded and become much, much bigger and more varied than it was before. Even the women of the family listen to the men talk of new things they had never heard of before. The whole of India has in a sense come into their home because they, as a family, are now able to reach out for nearly all the things their country can offer.

The coming of electricity has made life brighter, more comfortable, more cheerful. To be able to see everything clearly



even after sunset has made a big difference to the people. They have more time to meet, talk, study, relax and work. They have more entertainment than they used to, for electricity has brought the cinema, the radio and a variety of other things. With homes and streets lit up everybody feels safer too. Some homes even have electric fans and sewing machines. The village shops sell many of the things you buy in towns — plastic buckets, cotton cloth, soap and hair oil and ready-made clothes. Because life in the villages has become more comfortable, less people want to go away to the big cities. Two doctors, an engineer and a technician who knows about machines have come to live in the village. This is a picture of the best village we could find.

What about the village that did not stand first, or even second in the race, but third? Let us look at this village too. It does not yet have electric light, but the people use hurricane lanterns, not the *diva*. There are still no *pukka* roads, but they have made more *kaccha* roads. They have no electric pumps, but they use hand pumps. there is no big school building yet, but the people have put up a shed on poles and are running a school. They are using whatever they can, but they are not saying: We can't do anything, because we don't have this, or that.

This means that, in a vital respect, the people of this village have changed as much as the people of the villages that have stood first and second. They too have more confidence in themselves, even though they do not as yet have as much as others. They know that one day they will have as much. They know that they can make their lives better. They know that a better time is on the way and they are ready to work and wait for it.



There are villages that have done better than this, and villages that have done worse. The Important point is that *everybody* has moved forward. Every village has promoted itself to the next class, as it were. Agriculture is no longer thought of as something people do because they cannot help it, because they have no chance to do anything better, but as a highly profitable





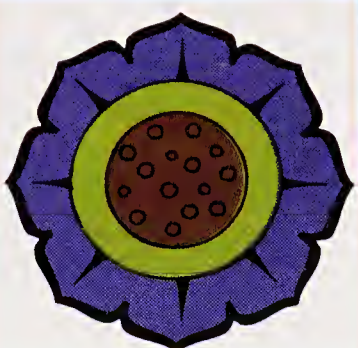
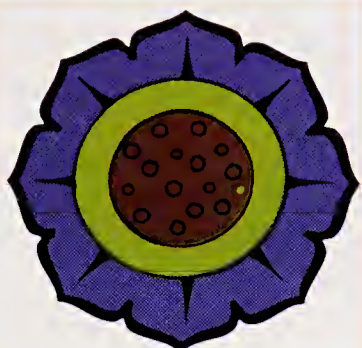
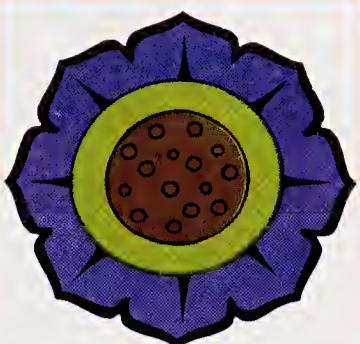
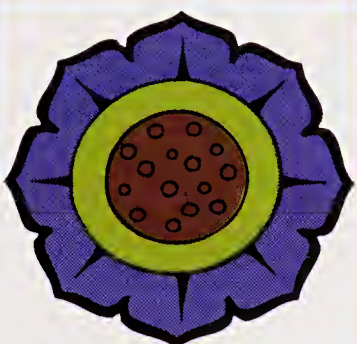
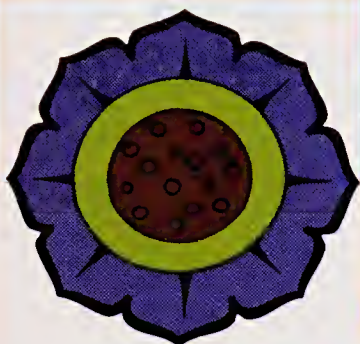
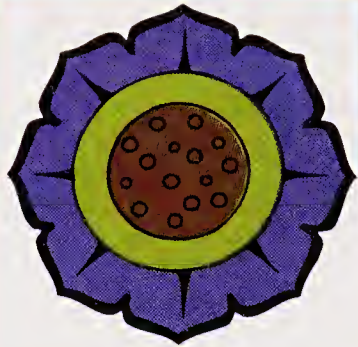
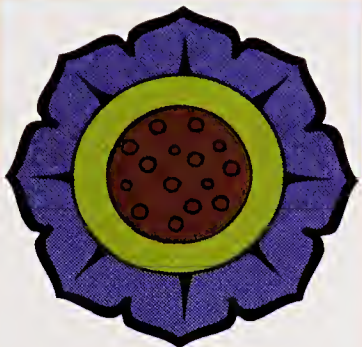
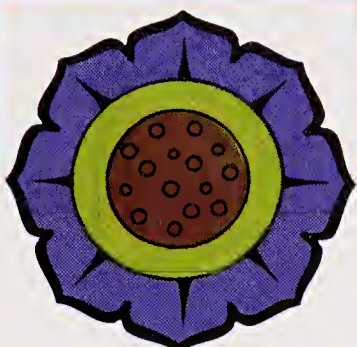
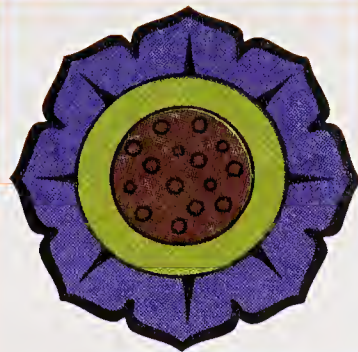
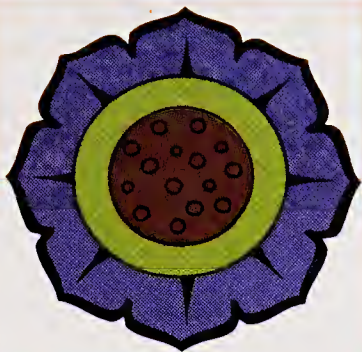
business. It has become normal for educated people to want to be farmers.

Old-fashioned strictness about caste and creed, about what should be done and what shouldn't be done, about whom one can eat with and whom one cannot eat with, is slowly on its way out. A clear, rational way of thinking is taking the place of the old ways. If a high caste person has travelled in a bus sitting next to a low-caste person or an 'untouchable' he no longer rushes to have a bath. There are more and more marriages between people of different types. The way family problems are solved also shows that our people are becoming more modern.

The most important change is that no one is alone, no one is helpless, no one is afraid to try out new things.







20

IS ANYTHING CHANGING?





things, when they grow, have to change. In an ordinary kind of change, a small thing becomes bigger but, except for the change in size, remains more or less the same. This is what happens when a plant grows taller, or a person becomes fatter. Quite another



kind of change takes place when a seed gives place to a plant, or a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, or when a chick hatches out of an egg. The plant looks so different from the seed that one can hardly see the connection between the two. The same is true of the butterfly. It is only because you *know* that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly that you believe it at all. Looking at an egg, one cannot easily guess what is inside.

“India is changing”. “Nothing is changing in India”. “India is changing very fast”. “India is changing very slowly”. “India has never changed, and it will always remain the same”. All these things are being said about our country, both by Indians and by others. Which one of them is true? The trouble is that each one of these statements has a bit of truth in it, so none of them can be called wholly wrong. But none of them is wholly right either. India is so vast and varied in every respect that most things one might want to say about the country will be true of some place, in some way. “India grows a lot of apples” is true of Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir, untrue of Kerala and Andhra. But on the whole one could say “India grows some apples”. “The most modern techniques are being used in agriculture” is more true of the Punjab than of Uttar Pradesh, but on the whole, one could say that Indian agriculture has improved. In the same way, it would be quite true to say that India has changed a great deal since she became independent about fifty years ago, and is changing faster and faster.

You have seen that the country earns more than it used to. It produces much more than before; not just more rice or wheat or cotton but a great variety of things that come from factories. Each Indian has more comforts, more chances, and more solutions



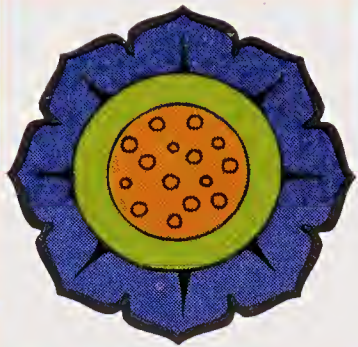
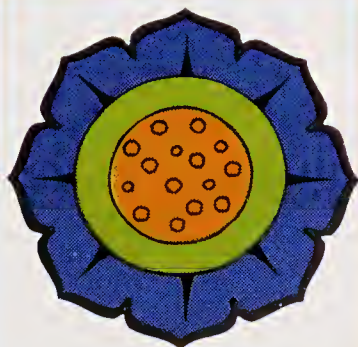
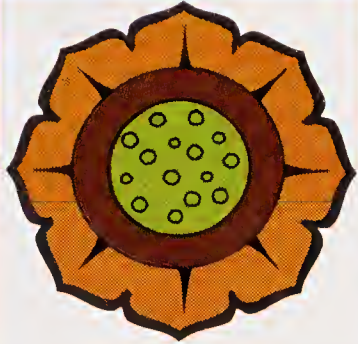
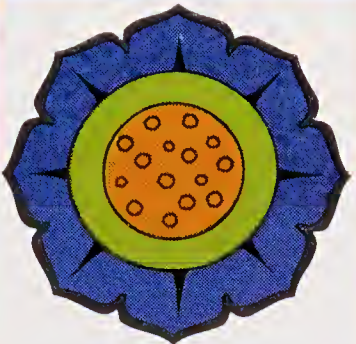
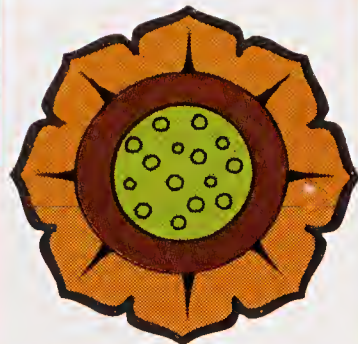
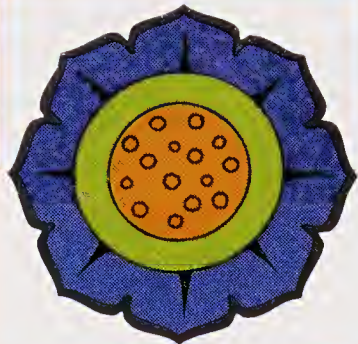
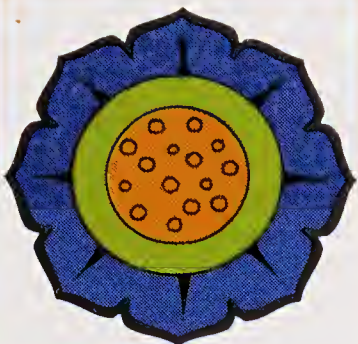
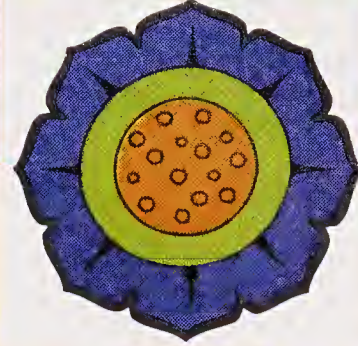
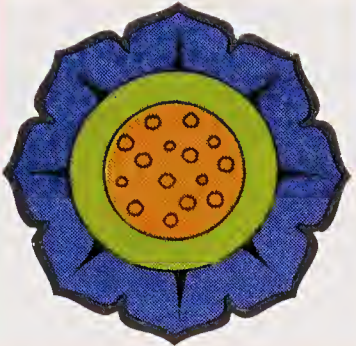
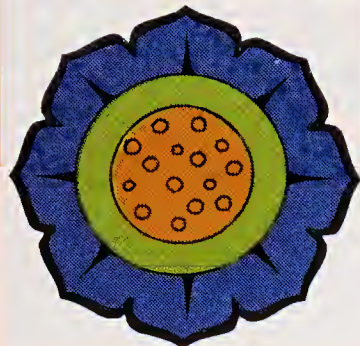
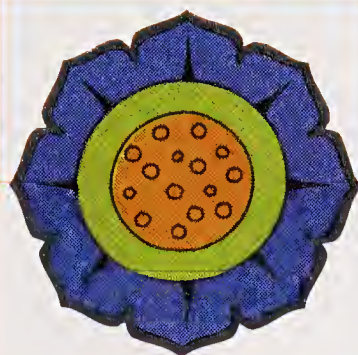
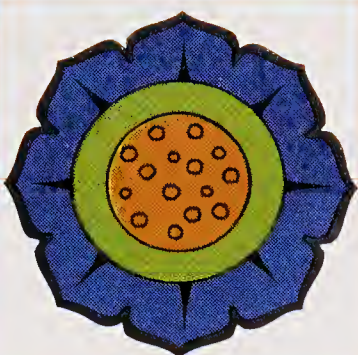
to his problems than he had before. Certainly these are changes, and they are very important changes, because they mean that more people have at least enough to eat.

But these changes are the kind of changes you see in a growing plant. Along with these changes — which are changes of growth — there is in India yet another kinds of change which is more like the change from egg to chick, or from caterpillar to butterfly. Sometimes people also change so much that you cannot recognize them. They not only look different, but also *become* different from inside. That is to say their personality also changes. Changes in personality have nothing to do with the kind of clothes someone wears, or the food he eats. So let us for a moment forget the clothes India wears or the food India eats and try to find out in what other ways India has changed, for countries too can change their personality.

After this you can decide for yourselves whether this change is a good thing or not. Each person will probably express a different opinion, and although you might not know it, this itself is a sign that there has been a big change.







21

BECOMING A NEW PERSON





ow many stories have you heard in which a poor man prays to God or to a goddess or to a king to make him rich? But stories grow out of real life. In India, most people believed that poverty, misery and



disease came from God. They were part of their fate, to be accepted without question. Today Indians know that poverty is not made by God but by man. They also know that man can get rid of poverty if he wants to and if he makes an effort. This knowledge has changed the thinking of persons, and this of course makes a very big difference to the kind of person an Indian is today.

Do you know some of these words? '*Ji huzoor*', '*mai-baap*', '*sarkar*', '*sahib*', '*swami*', '*prabhu*', '*dorai*'. Your parents have heard them every day of their lives. In our country, this is how people used to address those whom they thought were superior to them, more powerful than they were. The labourer on a farm used to stand with his head bowed, his hands folded, and his eyes on the ground when the landlord spoke to him. A Government officer with a big salary was almost a god to those who worked under him. It was normal for people in high positions to talk harshly to those who depended on them. Actually they never talked to them at all; not in the way one person talks to another. All they did was to give orders. "Do this", or "Get on with that, and hurry". That was all. The strangest thing was that nobody thought this strange; not even the people who were treated badly. No one was angry that one human being should think himself better than another, and get away with it. If ever a rich and powerful person decided to be different, and treated a humble person kindly, it was thought so extraordinary and so wonderful that people sat down and wrote poems and novels about it.

For hundreds and hundreds of years, things were like this in India. Now, there is a big change. People in India have begun to consider themselves as good as anybody else, whether they are rich or poor, powerful or weak. This then, is a big change.



When people feel that they are equal, they realize that they also have rights. So they begin to want more things than they did before. Today it is much easier for the Indian people to fight for their rights, because the Government wants them to have those rights and is generally on their side. Everyday you hear of strikes, demonstrations, *gheraos*, *dharnas*, and protest marches. However much trouble this may cause, it is a sign that people are no longer afraid to ask for the things they think they should have.

Older people often talk of the good old days that are gone — days when the food was better, everything was cheaper, children were more obedient, people had more character, days when life was better in every way. But then, all parents do grumble a bit. One of the reasons is that people enjoy things more easily when they are young. When they grow a bit older, they begin to feel that the best time was when they were young. Whether this is really true you have to decide for yourself.

In any case, the average man feels more important today than he did before. Does he not himself choose the Government that runs his country? Is he not a part of every decision that is taken? Even though he sometimes complains because the road to his village is not repaired as fast as it should have been, or because something else has gone a bit wrong, he is a prouder man than the Indian before him, a man with more dignity. Things are not just happening to him as in the days of the British. He himself is doing them or saying how they should be done. And when he says something, he knows that it counts.

Only twenty-five years ago we used to look to Western countries whenever we needed machinery or technical advice of



any sort. It was taken for granted that we were too backward to solve such problems on our own. Anything that came to us from outside was thought to be better than what we could make ourselves. This is not so today. Most of the foreign advisors and experts we invited to help us set up new factories or laboratories or other establishments have left because we do not need them any more. We are quite capable of doing most things ourselves. Not only that, we are also capable of helping less developed countries. In fact, we are already doing so. Indian experts, and Indian exports — trucks for example — go to many countries of Asia and Africa today. A very large number of Indians are employed by the United Nations to work in other countries as experts. Many Indians have set up their own factories even in advanced countries of the West.

It is not as though Indians have never been to other countries to work. In British days they did go, but they went as coolies. Do you know that in the old days, the British laid a railway line in East Africa with the help of Indian labour? Today too, we are building railways in other countries, but we have gone there as experts and technicians. Everything that these experts need is made in India — the railway lines, the engine, the wagons and all the equipment that is used. Facts of this kind naturally make a tremendous difference to the way Indians feel.

During British times, no high officials in the civil service or the army were Indian. Today only Indians have these jobs, and they can do them as well as anybody else. The Indian army, the fourth largest in the world, is one of the finest anywhere.

All these things have given Indians much more confidence in themselves. And because there is something real behind that



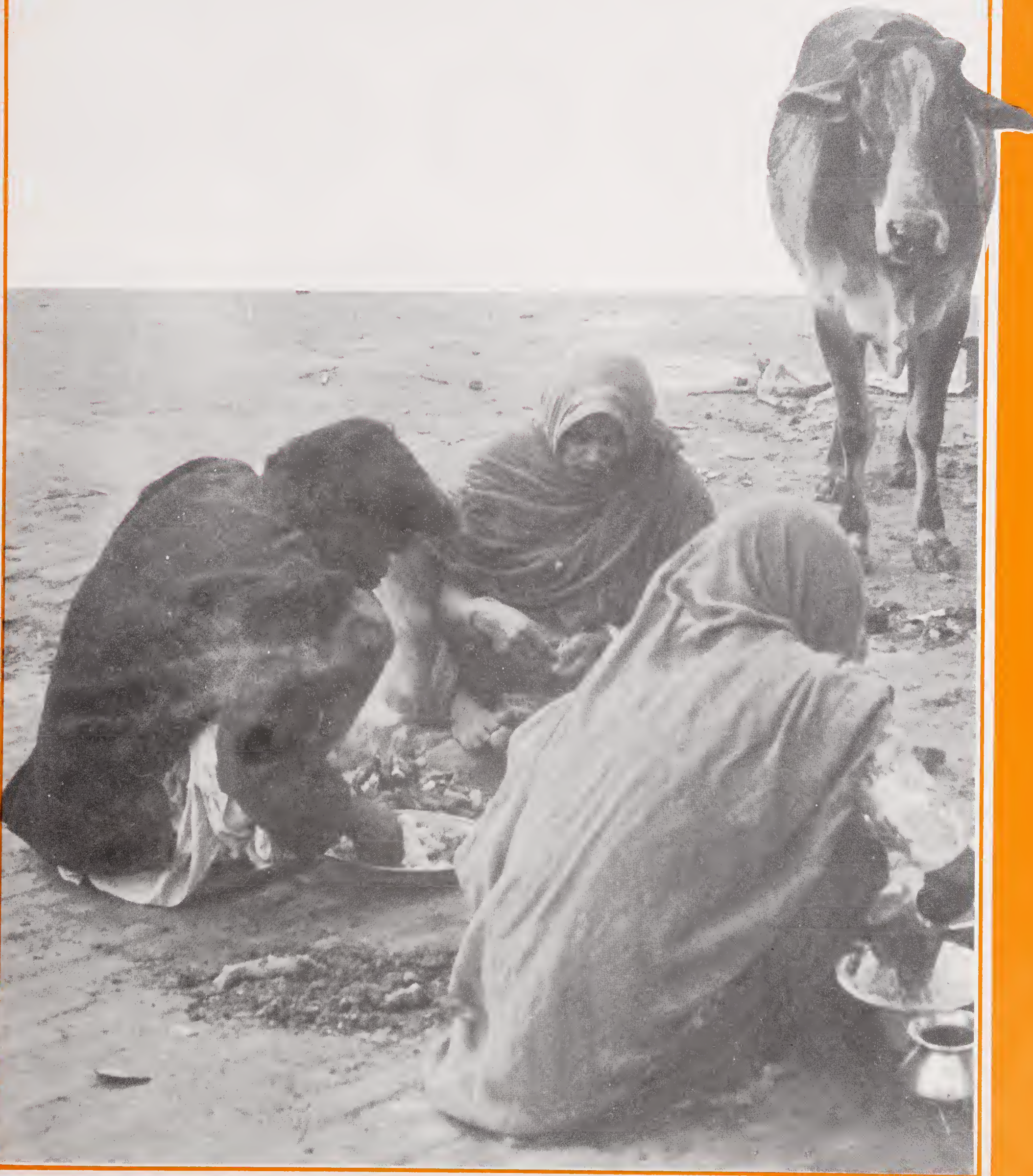
confidence, India has a place in the world, her voice is heard. We are a poor country but there are a great number of us, so many that we are economically the world's eighth most powerful country.

Another great change in the cities, towns and villages of India, and in the minds of Indians is that the strong feeling about caste and religion has become much less strong than it was. In earlier days a high caste Hindu refused to mix with a person of lower caste or of another religion. Many people were treated as though they were dirty. These were the 'untouchables'. The Constitution has made untouchability illegal, and people are beginning to agree that it is a bad thing and we must get rid of it. There still are a few people who do not want to mix with the so called untouchables, but more and more of them are getting over this unhealthy feeling. So our Constitution is not just a collection of big words written down in a book, but a reality. The narrow-minded caste feeling is going on its own because of a number of things. Many more people travel in buses and trains and they cannot worry so much about the caste and religion of the person sitting next to them. Many more young people go to school and college and learn that equality and justice and fair-play are good things and that it is bad to treat another human being as though he were inferior. Not only that; they come from all castes and religions and still study and play together and make friends amongst themselves.

The older people cannot stop them. People of all castes and religions work very closely together in factories, literally rubbing shoulders with one another. They cannot afford to think about the religion of the worker next to them. More people leave their



villages and towns and see other places. Their ideas get some

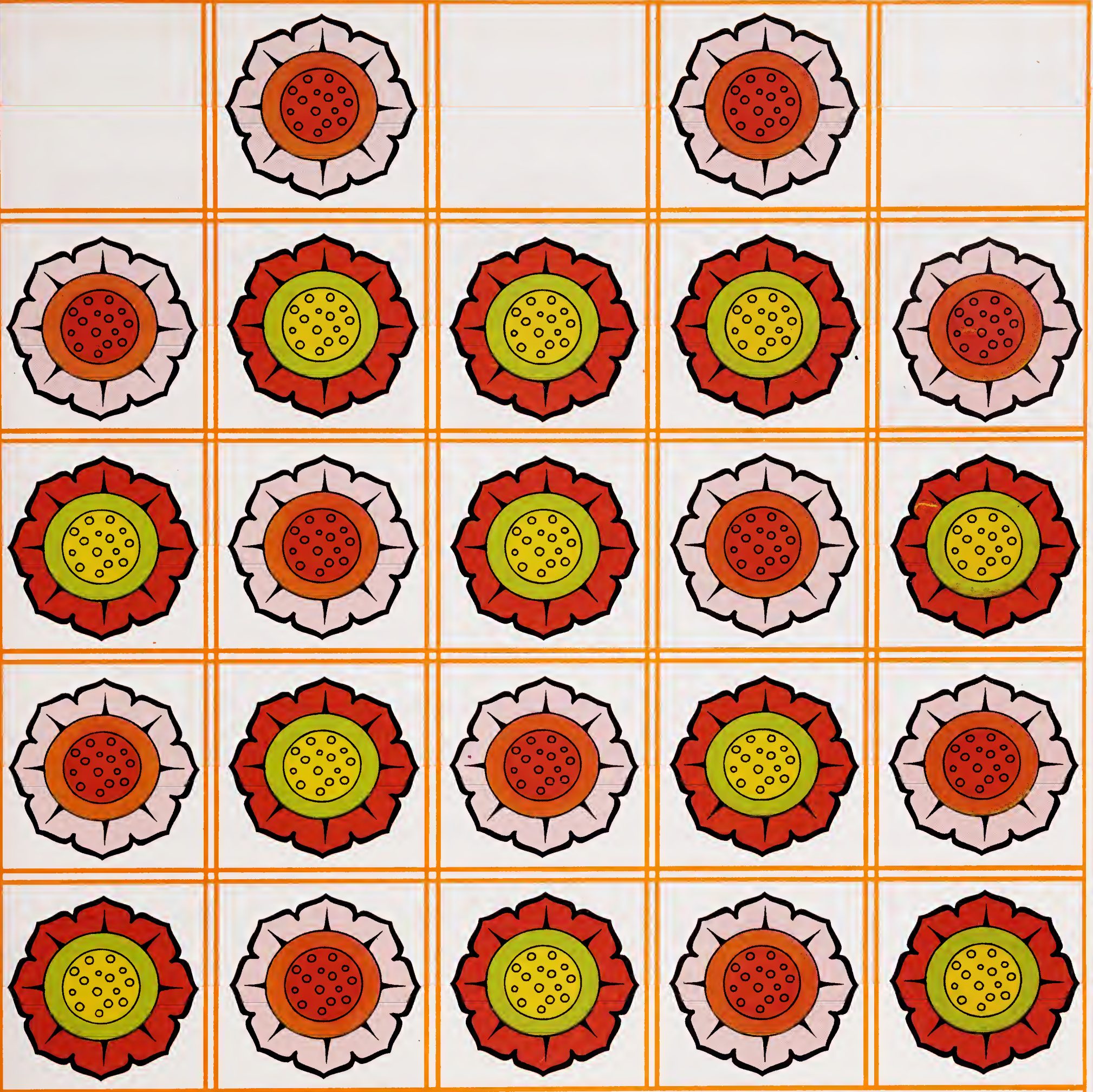




fresh air. When they go to a cricket match or a cinema where there are crowds of people, or to a restaurant for a cup of tea, it does not matter to them who is a Brahmin and who is a Harijan, who is a Muslim and who is a Hindu.







22

WHAT IS WRONG WITH US



$$2+2=3$$



he story of modern India is not just a story of heroes and triumphs; everything about us is not wonderful and all we have done is certainly not perfect and right. Old or young, we all know that we have made some mistakes; we have tried but failed to do many things we wanted to; in some things we have not tried hard enough. Most grown-ups grumble about something or other in this country — the rising prices, the bad bus services, the strikes, the lateness of trains, the overcrowding, the dust, the laziness, the dishonesty, and so on and so forth. But you will notice that it is always the





laziness, dishonesty, and inefficiency of someone else that is blamed. People do not usually talk about what is wrong with themselves, although the same things are wrong with them that are wrong with everybody else.

Do you remember the story of the king who ordered that during the night each citizen should pour a cup of milk into his bathing pool so that by the morning the whole big pool would be full of milk? The pool was indeed full the next morning, but it was full of water! This happened because each citizen thought *his* little cup of milk would hardly be noticed in a pool of milk, and decided to save the milk and pour water instead. You have also heard it said that it is better to light a little candle than to sit and curse the darkness.

In other words, it is the small things that add up and make a country great, not so much the big things. A martyr who happily gives his life for his country is a great man, no doubt, but no country can ride on the backs of great people for ever.

In the world of today, countries go forward only if most people are willing to work hard, to organize themselves properly,





to be disciplined, to have consideration for the rights of their fellow citizens. It is in these respects that we have not done so well.

We have enormous manpower, but we have not used it efficiently. People still tend to think only of themselves and their families. How often have you seen a proud Indian housewife sweep her house lovingly and dump the garbage in the street or in front of someone else's house? We have to admit that this kind of thing is also typically Indian, along with wonderful things like hospitality, respect for elders, patience, and desire for peace. How can we ever correct our faults if we do not make ourselves see them clearly? It is absolutely necessary for India to see what things need to be put right and then be her own doctor.

Mistakes, by the way, are perfectly normal. It is perfection that is abnormal. The more you try to do, the more chances there are that something will go wrong. But if some things do go wrong, it does not mean that nothing has gone right.

When you do not do so well in the examination, or fall down and hurt your knee, or are scolded by your mother for





disobeying her, it does not mean that you have stopped growing; nor is your friend, who does not make any of these mistakes, growing faster than you. The same is true of India. Many things that people grumble and complain about are true. But India is growing and developing all the same.. In any case, growing up is not the only thing that matters. Childhood can also be great fun. The childhood of the new India certainly is very exciting, because so much is going on here, and there is so much to do.

We must not think that everything in India is right or that everything is wrong, because both would be untrue. Some people feel very strongly that everything in India should be Indian. They are not willing to accept from other countries even things or ideas which are good for us. Nor do they want to understand the problems of any other nation. They show their love for the country by being rude to all foreigners, and get very angry and overexcited whenever India has dealings with another country.

Others feel that everything Indian is inferior, and that the best things come from foreign countries. They make tremendous





efforts to get even the things they need for daily use from abroad. They refuse to believe that the same things are made just as well in India. In shops, you still see talcum powder, hair oils, medicines, and cold drinks that carry foreign brand names, because for some people a foreign name still has some special fascination. We have to pay a very heavy price for this, but until the attitudes of the people about foreign things change, we will not be able to stop this.

We should realize that both these attitudes are extremes. This is certainly one of the things that is wrong with us. With a little more balance, we can find the right way of thinking, which is somewhere in between.

Most of the mistakes we have made in our planning have to do with our time-table. We have fallen behind our time-table in many things because a particular problem when we came to it turned out to be much bigger than we thought it was, or because certain difficulties came in our way for which we had not made enough allowance in our Plan. There were more delays in making decisions and carrying out decisions than there should have been. As a result of this, we could not provide education and employment for our people as far as we had promised ourselves that we would. Nor could we increase our earnings as quickly as we hoped to. But all such mistakes will correct themselves in time, because they have to do with providing more of the same thing, but faster, and more effectively. The important thing is that we did not make any mistake in choosing our road and did not take any wrong turning.

If a very heavy boulder is to be moved from a place where



it has been lying for centuries, a number of strong people must get together and push it. The strength of all these people together has to act on it for some time before it will move. Just before the





boulder moves, it looks quite still but a lot of work has already gone into it, and it will begin to roll any minute. This is something like the situation in India today. Even if the boulder does not seem to have moved very much, the work that has been put in the last forty-eight years will not be wasted because quite soon the boulder will begin to move from its place and start rolling at a great speed.

Let us take a closer look at just one of the areas in which we seem to have failed, that is, finding jobs for everyone.





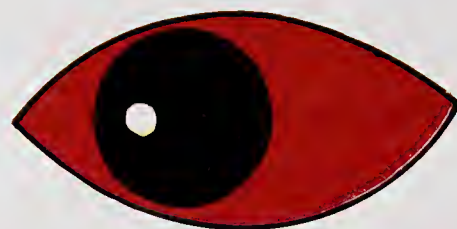
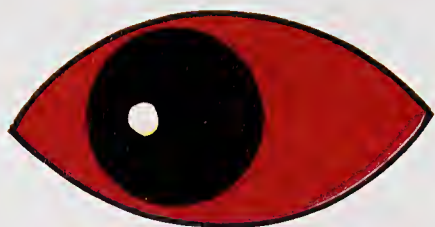


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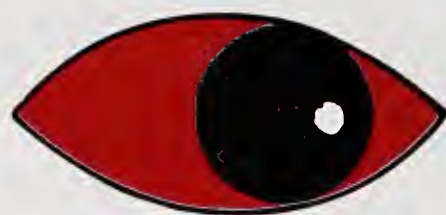
THE MEANING OF A PROBLEM



2



2



ou know that India has many problems; grown-up people are for ever talking about these problems in such a way that you feel you are too young to understand them. Perhaps you are. But there is one thing you can understand about all problems if you look at just one. It is this. No problem that India has is as simple as it seems at first.

One of our problems is that many people in India are looking for jobs. You have been told again and again that each Indian must work hard, that the country cannot go ahead unless every single person does his best. At the same time you hear that a very large number of people are without jobs, even people who are





trained to do some special work, people like doctors or engineers. This must seem very odd to you. But how is a job created?

Suppose your school decides to produce a play which needs ten actors. If there are five hundred children in the school, everyone cannot be an actor. What must the school do if each of the five hundred children must play a part? It will have to produce fifty such plays. Then perhaps everyone will be able to act, and of course this will be wonderful for the school. But the trouble is that at the moment the school cannot afford to produce more than one play. Do you now understand why there are not enough jobs for everyone in India today?

Now, let us take a large family where twenty people — father, uncles, brothers, cousins, nephews — live and work together on a big farm, of say 50 acres. What the farm produces can support the whole family, but only four of the people actually





need to work on the farm. The others help whenever they feel like it but they do not really have any particular job to do. The farm produces the same amount whether they are there or not. This means that the 50-acre farm has only four jobs, not more. The rest of the family are really without jobs, and doing nothing to help the country or themselves. Here we are talking only of jobs which produce something of value for the country, not jobs that will merely keep people busy. For instance, if these people were asked to dig holes in the ground and then fill them up, they would not really be doing anything though they would certainly be busy and hard-worked. So all the people in this family are not doing any *productive* job, though they may be fully occupied. They must move away and work on some other piece of land which is to be cultivated. Then they would be doing something useful, and have a real job to do.

But the trouble is that there just is not enough land in India for everyone, because there are far too many people. Where can the jobless members of the family find jobs, if not on the land? If there is a great deal of activity in the country, and a great many projects and schemes, they might find jobs as road-builders, factory workers or school teachers. But will *all* of them find jobs?





That would depend on how much activity is going on in the country, or rather how much activity it can afford to take up at a particular time. As you know, factories, schools, and roads take money to build. If the country had unlimited means, any number of useful projects could be started and everyone would have jobs, but we are not rich enough to start at once all the projects we need.

The less developed we are, the fewer jobs we have. Take an old-fashioned village where the bullock cart is the only means of transport. A bullock cart is certainly an advance over walking, so let us see how many jobs it can create. First, the carpenter who makes the wheel and the cart; then the animal doctor, who looks after the bullocks; perhaps a man who sells oil to stop the creaking of the wheels; a rope-maker; and a shopkeeper who sells fodder for the bullocks. That makes hardly five jobs, or even less, because each of these persons need not be working all the time. What do you think would happen when the car and the jeep take the place of the bullock cart? Will these five people lose their jobs? Yes, they will, but do you know how many more jobs the car and the jeep will create?



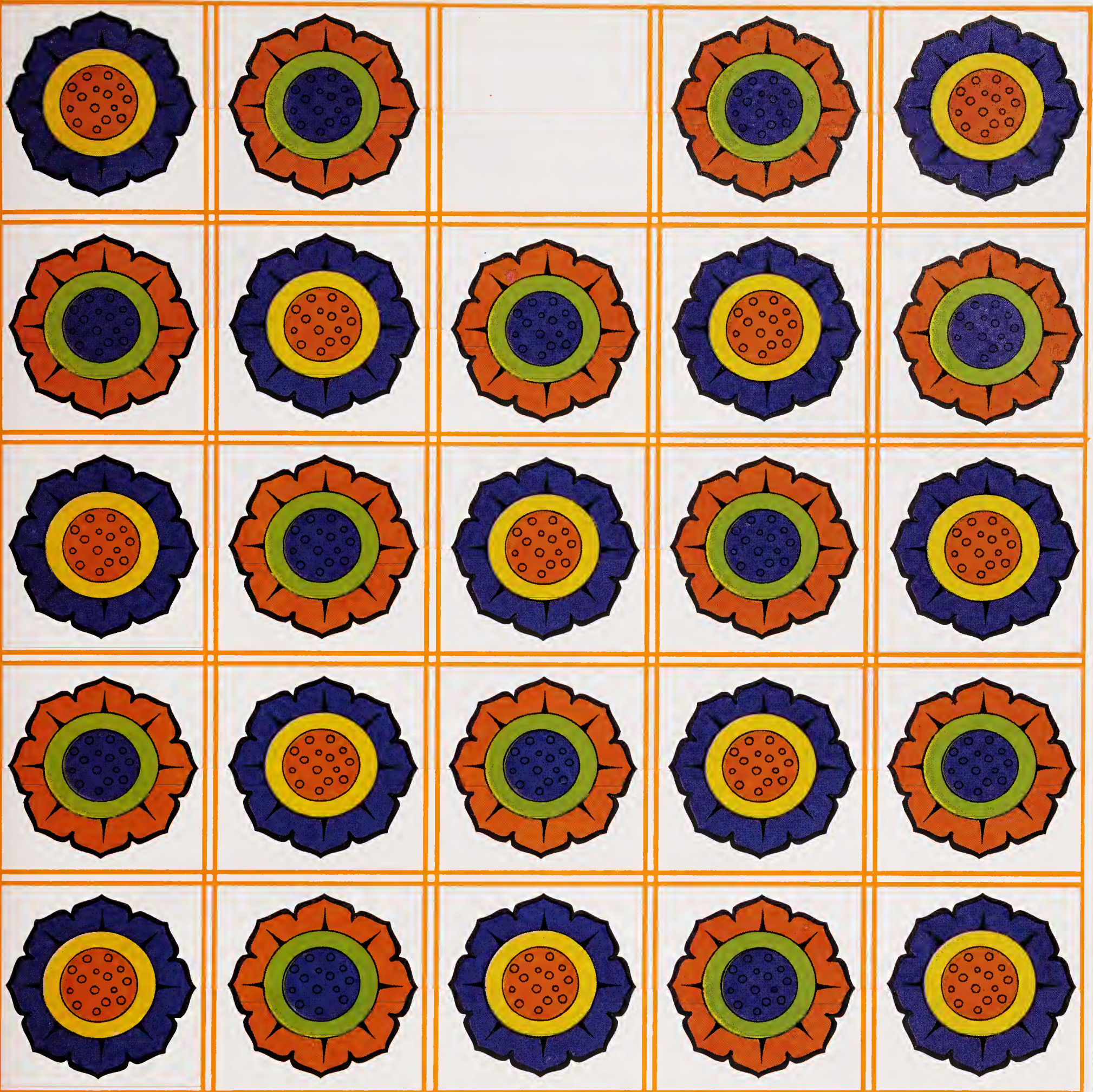
The car needs a good road. Hundreds of people have to work to make a road. It will also need a petrol station, a workshop, a spare parts shop. Many people will be needed to work in these. Some will have to learn about the engine of the car, and others about the electrical fittings; so they will need experts to train them, and a place where this training can be given. This place will have to be built and kept clean. One could go on and on. The number of jobs one car and one jeep could create would be many times more than the five jobs they would take away.

You will be interested to know that when the motor car first appeared in Europe, there was an uproar. The people whose jobs depended on the coach and the horsedrawn carriage were sure that their livelihood would now be taken away. They protested at first; but they soon found that the motor car had brought many more jobs than it had taken away.

Unemployment is not our only problem. We have talked about it only so that you might understand how many things have to be thought of at the same time, if a problem is to be really solved.

India's problems will soon be your problems. It is you who will have to sort them out. It is you who will build up the country you live in, in the way you want to. Don't you want a wonderful place to live in?

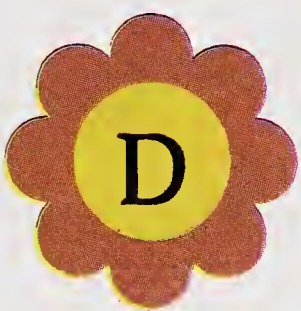




24

PAINTING MAGIC





Did you know that you have a painter's magic brush in your hand? In front of you is a huge canvas. One day, a wonderful picture will appear on this canvas. Millions of people will take part in painting this picture. Will you be one of the artists? Or will you throw your brush away because the canvas in front of you is blank and go and look at some other pictures which have already been painted by others? Surely, it would be much more fun to do the painting yourself, even though someone else's painting might be more



perfect. If you think so, you can be a very useful Indian, because the canvas that is to be painted is India. You and all other Indians are the artists. The picture of India will be as lovely as you make it.

The thing to understand is that no one but Indians can paint well on this canvas. If others tried, their colours would not come out as brightly as yours. At the beginning of this book we spoke of your Indian-ness, and this Indian-ness is the magic brush which lights up each colour that you put on your country's canvas.

Whatever is in you, whatever you have to give to the world, India is the best place for you, for the simple reason that you belong to the country and the country belongs to you. Because it is your home, you are bound to feel more free on its than you would in the homes of others. As you know, those who share your home usually understand better than others what you are trying to say or do. And of course, you are the best person to do things for India, just as a mother is the best person to give a bath to her baby, even though a trained nurse might do the job better. In the second case, the job of giving the bath does less good, both to the baby and the nurse. Making India a fine, strong and happy country is a giant task, as you know. We have been working on it for fifty years now. We have done very well in some things and not so well in others. On the whole, we can say that we have passed the first examination. But this first examination is only like a small class test. The really big examinations are ahead, and the country must do her best to prepare for them.

There are huge problems before us. Millions of people are still hungry, still underfed, still weak, still poor. Millions of



children need more nourishment, more schools, more medicines. Millions are without jobs and houses. The country's resources are still not fully used. If we tried we could get still more from our land, and much more from our mines and our forests. We could get much more electricity out of our rivers and we are capable of producing much more of almost everything that you could think of, and making it available to more of our people. Our doctors could learn much more and be of even more use to the people. We could build more schools, colleges, libraries, laboratories, hospitals, factories, roads and railways. And we could make all these better than before. We could also get much more productive work out of our people than we have done. The arrangements we have made so far could be made much better, more orderly, more efficient. There is such an enormous amount to do. Whatever you look there are problems, waiting to be solved.

These problems have always been there. We cannot escape from them. For about fifty years, we have been a free nation and in a position to solve them. If we had become free a hundred years earlier, we would have had to start solving these problems then. The lucky thing for us is that today we have not only problems, but also many, many possible solutions. All we have to do is to choose the solution that suits us best and then work hard to use it. The twentieth century, the time in which we live, is a time in which man has been able to do marvels with science. All kinds of amazing discoveries have been made which can be of great use to human beings in their daily lives. Diseases which used to end often in death have become as simple to cure as a stomach upset because of the new discoveries in medical science. The energy of the sun or the atom can be caught and used in a







hundred different ways. Agricultural scientists can make seeds behave in almost any way they want. Wonderful new designs for houses, factories, aeroplanes, ships, and cities are available. So are easy ways of giving people the food and nourishment they need. Only a few years ago a transistor would have been considered a miracle. Today you see it everywhere. A whole new world of science is ours to use for solving our million problems.

Many countries have already done what we are trying to do today. The advantage of beginning late is that we can use the experience of others and avoid the mistakes they made. When Britain first set up industries a hundred and fifty years ago, the cities where factories went up became very ugly, dirty and unhealthy to live in. Hundreds of drab and smoky, industrial towns came up, and the lives of the people who lived and worked there became much more miserable than before, for many reasons. Britain was trying to do something for the first time and no one could imagine beforehand what problems would arise. Now that we know what Britain went through, we need not build ugly towns or bad houses. There are many other countries whose experience can help us to avoid making mistakes.

So you see, things are much easier for us today because we not only have problems, but also solutions. Let us come back to the brush in your hand for a moment and say that all the different things that need to be done in India are like the colours that have to be put on the Indian canvas. And the colours we have to paint with — that is, the ways in which we can do those different things — are today stronger and brighter than ever because of science and the experience of others. No good artist can resist a huge canvas if he has bright colours and a magic brush to paint with.



Nowadays there is a great deal of talk about progress. Does India now have more of this or that, people ask. We wonder all the time how soon India will be as rich and as advanced as USA, or Japan, or other countries in Europe. Many young people who have had a chance to visit such countries feel rather superior and talk proudly of the marvellous things they have seen; the slot machines which give you whatever you want to eat or drink, air services where planes leave every two minutes, trains that rush at a speed of 200 kilometers an hour, dazzling neon signs and fabulous shows, all kinds of gadgets that save time and trouble, streams of long, smooth, shining cars moving in orderly rows on highways broad enough to take eight rows at a time; and markets bursting with a tremendous variety of things, each more attractive than the other. All these are signs of economic prosperity.

India is very far from this stage. But is this the way India wants to go? You all know that wealth is not everything, that it is possible for a person to be quite unhappy although he has everything that money can buy. This is because money cannot buy everything. On the other hand, people who have very little can be very happy, too. The richest countries in the world today are the countries where more people kill themselves than anywhere else.

They have nervous breakdowns or take to drugs. They find life more difficult to face than people in much more backward places. They are bored and afraid, and want to escape from what they have to something else. They seem to have no purpose and look unhappy and dissatisfied. Have you not seen young foreigners wandering about in the cities and towns of India? Why have these people left their comfortable air-conditioned

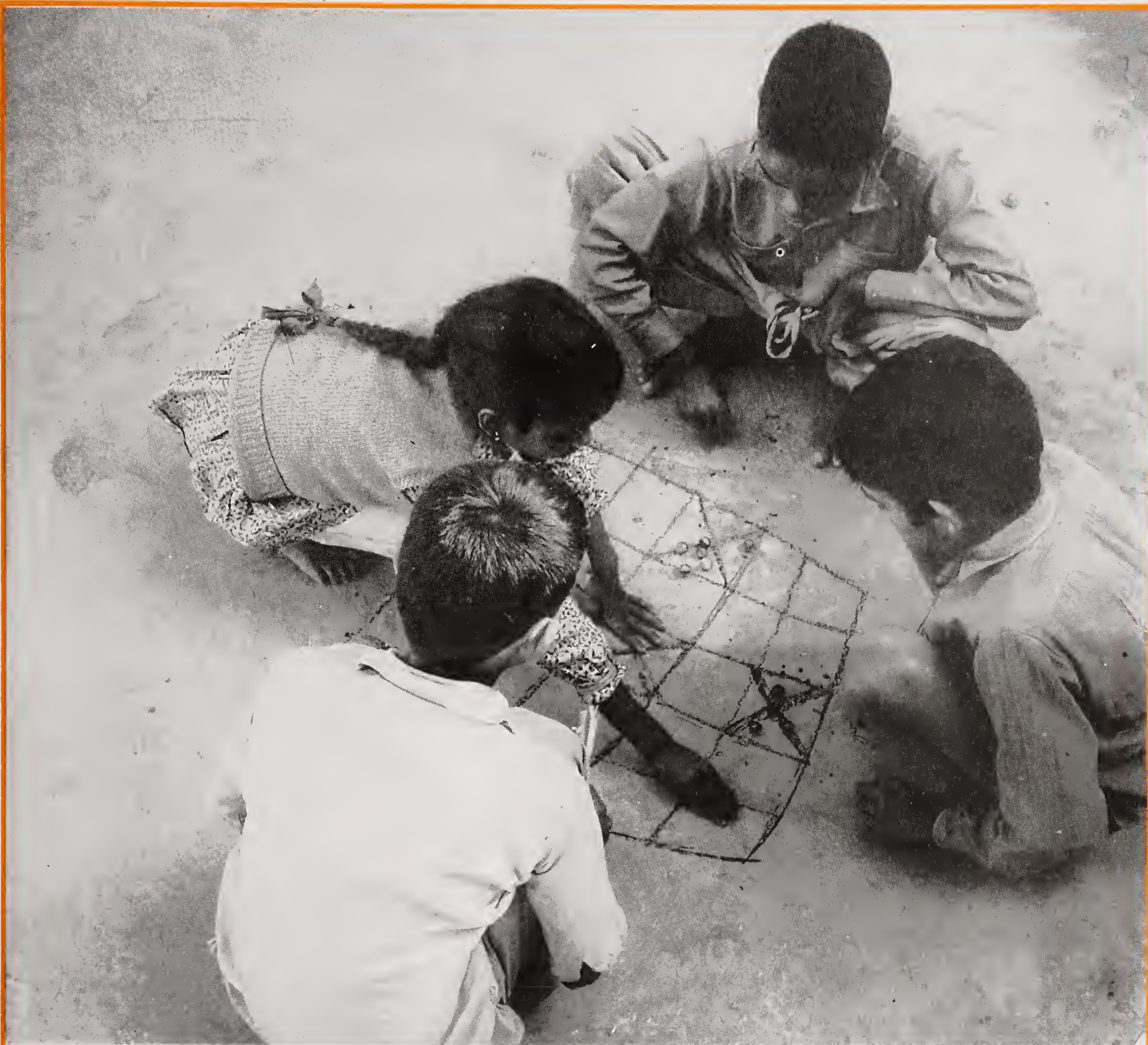


homes and come here? Because they are in search of something new, something which will give them more peace and happiness than they have at home. And in this search for something different they go not to even richer countries but to countries like India. This should convince you that more and more development is not what people need to be happy.

The advanced nations of the world have conquered space but they have not been able to conquer fear. The power they have makes them afraid all the time that some other nation might someday have more power than they and become strong enough to challenge them. The fear of war is always in their hearts. What good are the comforts these countries can give to their people if they are frightened? Even children in very advanced countries can get very bored because every kind of amusement and fun they can think of is provided to them. No, it would not be a good idea for India to think of these countries as a complete model or ideal. But of course India must become rich enough to provide everyone enough food, clothes, a house to live in, a job and a chance to learn. Only after all this is done can we have the right to say that riches are not everything.

If not riches, then what else? What is it that makes people happy? There is no simple answer, but one of the answers certainly is : 'being useful and important'. A game gives pleasure because in the playing of it each person has to exert himself to the fullest. The best each person can do is needed by the team and each person's play makes a big difference to the game. This is why a touch game is much more fun for the players than a game which is too easily won, or too easily lost. The new India is a playfield where you can play a good game. Life is still not easy and



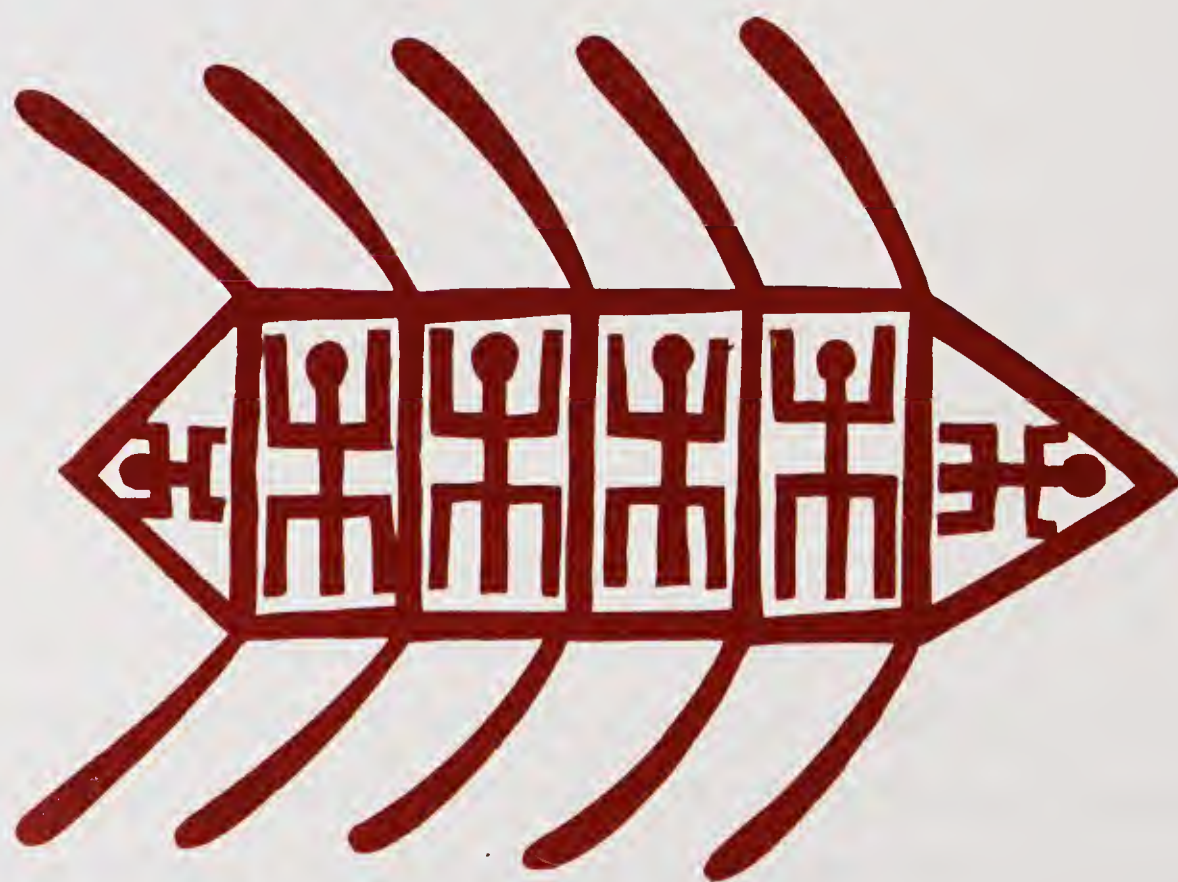


therefore the game you have to play is bound to be a tough one. If you can play your part, and do your best you will feel useful and important and this is what life is really about, when all is said and done. Leaving the field to others and going away to watch a game that others are playing can also be interesting but

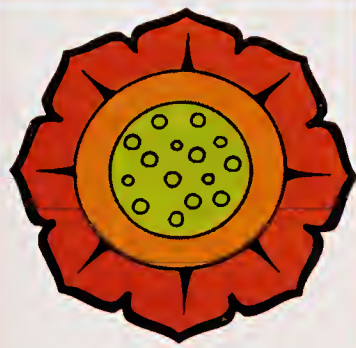
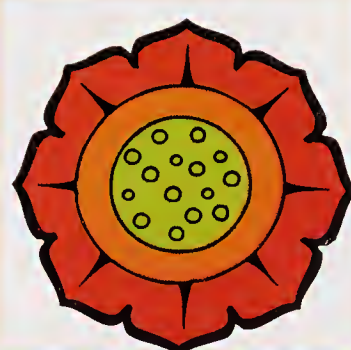
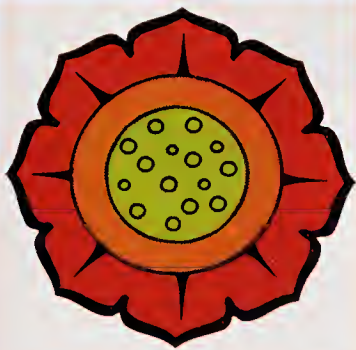


not half as interesting or exciting as playing it yourself.

For this reason, India is a wonderful country to be born in.







25

# COLOURING THE WORLD



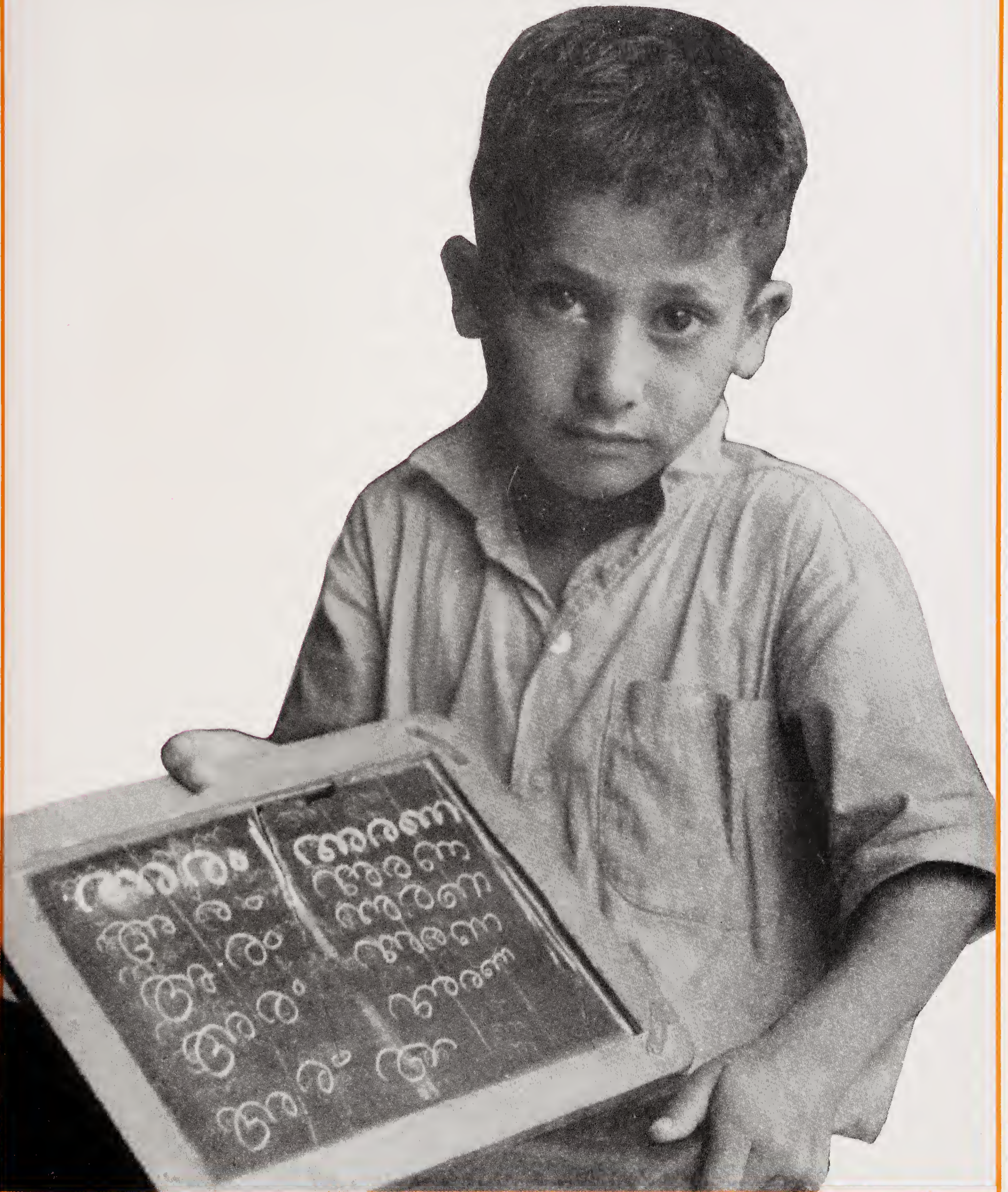


You can already feel the back cover of this book with your fingers. We are nearly at the end of our long talk. In a minute, you will put the book down and rush off to do something else. But before you run away, there is a simple thought you could take with you. Put it into your pocket, like a pebble, but don't lose it, because one day this pebble may turn into gold.

This is the thought. The smallest thing you do will make a difference to you and to the whole world. Just think of it : Doesn't



it make you feel very important and also perhaps a little humble?





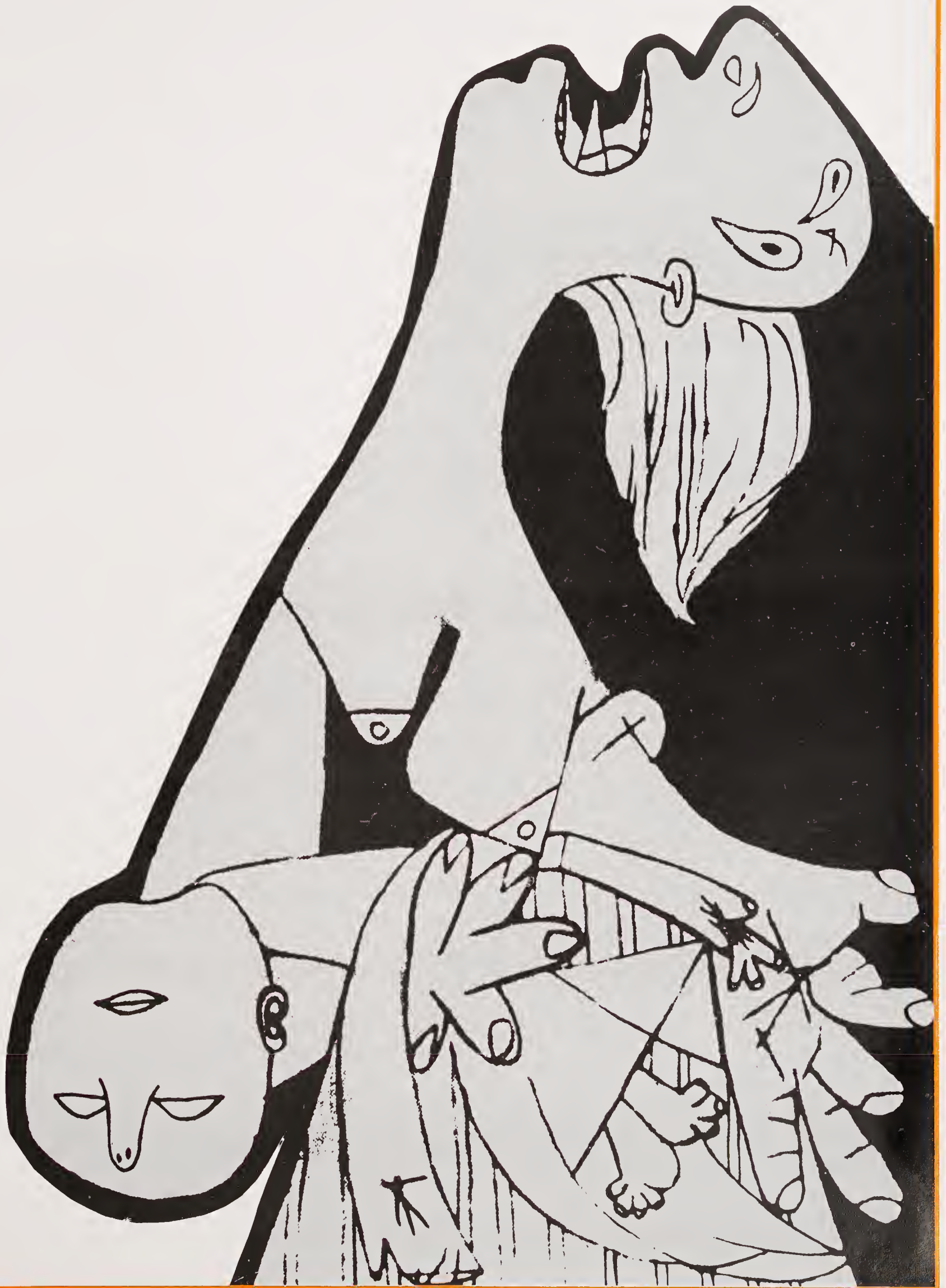
You are the painter with the magic brush—, will make a beautiful picture, the picture of a new India. But we live in such an age that this picture will make a big difference to a whole art exhibition. The question is : will our picture make the world exhibition more beautiful or less beautiful?

Every country is trying to paint pictures to put in the art exhibition of the world. But we in India have more space in this exhibition than most other countries. The smallest thing we do to improve our picture adds to the beauty of the whole world. Do you know why? We Indians make up one-seventh of the whole human race on earth. There are more people in India than in three whole continents — Africa, South-America and Oceania— put together. Therefore, when we do something to make the lives of the Indian people better, we are automatically improving the lives of one-seventh of the people of the world.

The size of our population is not the only reason why what we do is important. Even small nations can affect and change human life. This is because the world has become a much smaller place than it used to be. Not that the world itself is shrinking. It is the mind of man that has expanded. If people can go to the moon, and explore a planet like Mars 34,800,000 miles away, distances on earth hardly mean anything. One can go from one country to another in just a few hours; one can talk to any person in any part of the world by radio-telephone. The world has become like one big house, and the human race like one family. Whether a nation has war or peace, poverty or wealth, happiness or unhappiness, it affect the whole world. We in India are fighting a brave but difficult battle against poverty. We cannot really win if there is war, fear or bloodshed anywhere in the world.



For the same reason, every country needs peace within its own borders, as well as in the world. This is possible only in all





the countries of the world go on trying to solve the problems that come up between them in a friendly manner and help each other in whatever they might be trying to do. No nation can live on an island of its own, completely cut off from the rest of humanity.

There can be enough in the world for everybody, and more. Even if there weren't, science has shown us how we can add to what the world has to give us. We can go deeper into the sea for more food, or create new foods in the laboratory. So there is no real reason for anyone to fight. The trouble starts when the gifts of the earth are not distributed fairly; or when one nation tries to bully another; or when one nation regards itself as better than another; or when millions of people are left to live in poverty and misery, and nothing is done for them. Then the human spirit cries out in protest, as it must, and there is hatred, war and misery.

Our country is young and bursting with energy; but it is also ancient and wise. What is old about India inspires us; but we are also excited by what we have learnt in science and technology from countries of the West. We still have much to learn and much to do; but we have the will to do it, enough people to do it, and all the gifts of nature to help us.

All these facts are our colours — bright reds, gentle greens, whites and greys and browns that are a little sad, calm blues, soft pinks, and many, many bold and happy colours. Now, let us dip our brushes and start work.



"How?", did you say?  
Simply by doing what each one of  
you is expected to. But do it a little  
better than before.

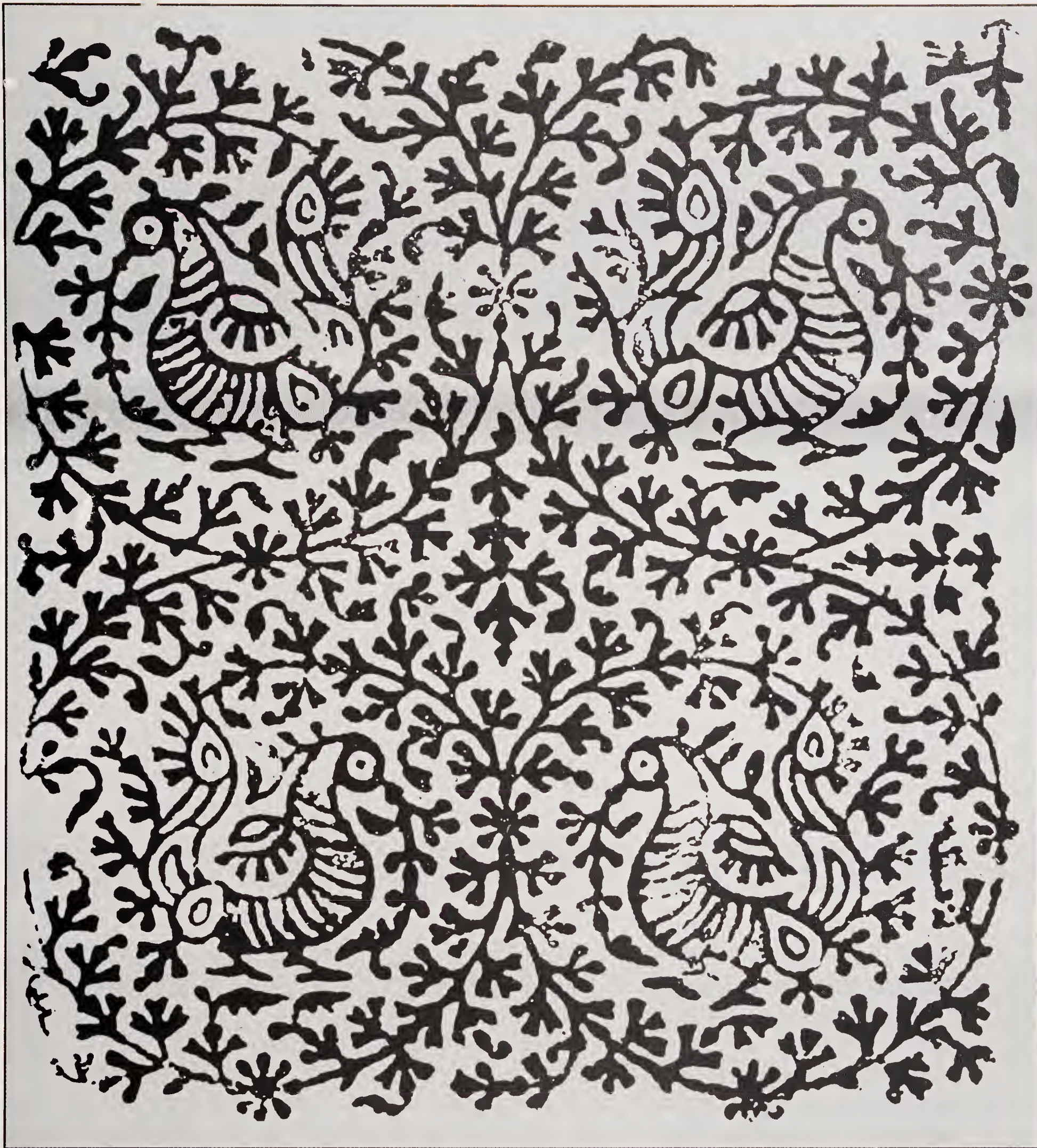
This is the only way of making our  
picture of India beautiful.











ABOUT THIS BOOK



### **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

This book is intended for children who are beginning to ask adult questions about India. Since this stage of questioning might come before or after the age of twelve, no specific age is being mentioned. To children who accept and do not yet ask, this book offers an opportunity to understand their involvement with India. It tries to say in easy and simple language what India is, where it is going, and what it might now mean to the rest of the world. The book describes the efforts of India during the last forty-eight years, and discusses how the quality of life has changed in this country since we became independent.

What is the Indian way of life that we are always talking about? What is the meaning to the youngster of today of such terms as faith, heroism, hard work, and social transformation, which he comes across again and again? If economic progress is the most important consideration for a country, as it sometimes appears to be, why should any young Indian want to stay here if he has an option to go elsewhere? Is the cultural continuity of which so much is heard still there? If so, how does it manifest itself? What is Indian-ness, the



link which we all have with the remotest villager and with the Indian of a thousand years ago? Developments in the economic, political and sociological spheres are considered in trying to answer these and related questions.

The present volume is intended to be a companion to the Children's History of India, where no dates have been used in the narrative. Here, too, the emphasis is on the roots and directions of the transformation India is undergoing rather than on mere facts and figures.

The design of the book is of special interest. Communication is achieved through visual materials familiar to the Indian eye. Traditional motifs from classical, tribal, folk and modern art blend comfortably with contemporary black-and-white photographs to project and interpret each theme. It is hoped that the picture and the world will endure together in the young reader's mind and that the child's memory will refer to them with increasingly significant recognition.

In this sense this is a book that may grow along with the child.



## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Pupul Jayakar, Prof. K. Swaminathan, B.L. Dhar, Chameli Ramachandran, Abul Hasan, H.Y. Sharada Prasad and Rajesh Bahadur, without whose invaluable help, which came in many different ways, this book would not have been possible.

To the library of the United Service Institution of India, New Delhi, for their help and co-operation;

To the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, for facilities to reproduce portions from old Indian newspapers and from Jawaharlal Nehru's *Discovery of India*;

To the New School for Social Research, New York, for permission to reproduce J.C. Orozco's 'Struggle in the Orient';

To the Instituto Nacional de bellas Artes, Mexico City, for permission to reproduce David Alfaro Siqueiros' work 'Our Present Image';

To the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, for permission to reproduce Amrita Shergil's 'Mother India';

To the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department New Delhi, for facilities and permission to reproduce postage stamps of British India.





















# THIS INDIA

ISBN : 81-230-0564 - 4

PRICE : Rs. 200.00